Powerless
Written by Jabc
Cover by Zapz

Invitations

Leafy blinked as the sunrise woke her up. She yawned, stretched, smiled a huge smile, then leapt to her feet. Despite the dead grass and half-burnt trees, it was a beautiful day outside. She could see Flower blooming across the field, her petals automatically unfolding to soak up the sun. "Good morning, everyone!" the lemon leaf called out cheerfully to the rest of the Losers. "It's time to start the day!"

"Already? Really?" Coiny complained. He was lying on his back. He flopped his arms once, then gave up. "Yeah, I'm not getting up."

Pin, who was already up, giggled. "Come on, silly!"

She knelt down to grab Coiny's hand, but he used his feet to push himself away, sliding across the burnt grass. "Catch me if you can!" he called out, quickly scooting away on his back much faster than the others though he could.

"Get back here!" Pin chased after him.

Leafy watched them for a moment, then glanced around at the others. Firey had gotten up but was already walking away. Needle looked like she was still asleep, while Eggy and Cake were just exiting their slumbers. And Clock was lying on the ground several feet away from the others. Even though it had been a few weeks since he finally got recovered, he was still sulking about being forgotten.

Leafy was considering going to talk to him when she heard a loud *crunch* come from behind her. She whirled around to see a startled Cake screaming at a giant jawbreaker that had crushed Eggy. Yellow yolk was splattered all over the ground, the jawbreaker, and Cake himself. Leafy rushed over, reaching them the same time that Needle did.

"What happened?" Needle asked.

"I- I don't know!" Cake seemed to have calmed some, but still looked on edge. "This enormous jawbreaker just fell out of the sky and killed Eggy!"

"Weird." Leafy inspected the jawbreaker and noticed that it was inside out. She had seen this before... but where?

Movement caught her eye. She turned to see iance, the team closest to them, crowding around two tall, wooden objects. One had a red top and the other, a pink one. *Match and Pencil?* Leafy thought. *I thought those two got eliminated...*

Looking around at other teams, she saw that each team was whole again (excluding BEEP) - they all had their previously eliminated teammates returned to them. *Wait,* Leafy realized. *That means...*

"Hey, what's this?" Needle interrupted Leafy's train of thought, grabbing a note that was stapled to the jawbreaker. "Dear contestants," she read out loud. However, she got no farther, as the jawbreaker promptly exploded and blasted her into the dirt. A figure stepped out of the sugary rubble.

"Oh my bakery! LOSER!" Cake shouted.

Loser hugged him. "Good to see you, Cake," he said in his old man voice. "The same goes for the rest of you Losers."

In the distance, Clock sat up. "Oh, hooray," he said sarcastically. "Loser's back. Whoopee." Then he flopped back onto the grass.

Loser looked concerned. "What's up with him?"

"Oh. Uhhh..." Cake was suddenly very interested at looking at his feet.

Leafy picked up the note that Needle dropped. "I'll tell you later. For now, I want to know what's going on, with all the eliminated contestants returning." She cleared her throat. "Dear contestants..."

"...I know that episode 16 was supposed to happen today," Balloony

read out loud to the rest of his teammates. "But something urgent was happening back at the Algebra Playground, and X and I needed to go make sure everything was ok." He paused. "What's the algebra playground?" he wondered.

"I dunno," Nickel replied.

"Me neither," Cloudy said. "But remember those swings from episode 3? I remember seeing the words 'Equation PGD' on them. Perhaps that's where Four is from?"

Balloony thought about it. "Yeah, but I've never heard of a place on Earth called the Equation Playground."

"Keep going, Balloony." This was from Nickel.

The airhead found the line he had left off at. "So because we will be gone for a few days..."

"...episode 16 will not happen for a couple more days." Fries lowered the paper. "Man, that sucks. I was looking forward to the next contest! Whatever that might have been."

"Eh." Eraser shrugged. "I was getting a bit bored, actually."

"You're *always* bored," Marker pointed out.

Fries decided to continue. "Instead..."

"...I chose to let the eliminated contestants roam around for a bit while we're gone." Gelatin snorted. "We saw *that*, alright. It's gonna be a while before I forgive you for trying to burn me, Firey Jr."

"Hey! You guys deserved it for belittling me!" Firey Jr. complained.

"Calm down, Jr," Barf Bag said kindly. He harrumphed and crossed his arms.

"In addition to the former Exitors," Tree read out loud to Death PACT, stealing a glance at Liy as he did so, "I have arranged something with Loser. He will be hosting a party for everyone at the mansion."

"What mansion?" Pillow asked.

At that moment, a large, two-story mansion materialized next to Gabop *(or Bleh, or eight-names-at-once, or whatever the heck you like to call that team)*. As it appeared a few feet above the ground, it then fell to the ground, landing with a resounding *whump* that shook the earth and crushed Gaty. "Ohhh. *That* mansion."

"Aaaaand Gaty is dead!" Bottle announced cheerfully.

Pen groaned. "Yeah, we saw."

"Is that everything?" Golf Ball demanded.

"No, there's more," Blocky responded. GB snatched the note from him. "Hey, give that back!"

Golf Ball read it, ignoring him. "The party will start at 7 o'clock tonight, and it will go for several hours. Ask Loser if you want to know more details. DON'T enter the mansion before the party, and make sure you're not in there when time's up!"

"Oh, so this is a contest?" Basketball asked.

Grassy threw his arms into the air. "Grassy LOVES contests!"

"Probably not. I think Four just likes time limits," 8-Ball theorized.

Golf Ball grunted and let Blocky take the paper back. "Well, I say that a party is a frivolous waste of time."

Tennis Ball opened his mouth to say something to GB, but got distracted by Pin and Coiny passing by. Pin was still chasing Coiny, who was still pushing himself along the grass with his feet. They

were both laughing hysterically.

Blocky took the opportunity to continue reading the note. "One more thing..."

Snowball lifted the paper away from Ruby's grabbing hands. "...since I'm gone, I won't be able to re... rec... recov..." He groaned in frustration. "I can't read that word."

Fanny sighed and glanced at the paper. "It says 'recover,' you dimwit!"

"Yeah, whatever." SB kept going. "I won't be able to recover any of you. Overnight, I *did* recover all of your teammates that died in previous episodes. But don't die again!"

Everyone on iance looked over to where Gaty had been squished by a corner of the mansion, then back at Bubble. The soapy sphere backed away from Flower and Snowball. "Uh, anyone got Yoyleberries?"

"I think, like, Pin might have still have some Yoyleberry seeds from BFDIA," Match said. She and Pencil were leaning against each other.

"Good idea!" Pencil raised her finger and stepped away from Match, causing the woodsicle to fall over with an *oof*. "I'll go tell Pin to give us some Yoyleberry seeds later. But right now, I want to go visit Loser!"

Match stood up with the speed of lightning (the natural kind, not the character). "Ooh! Me too, Pence-Pence! Let's go!"

They walked off together, with Ruby and Flower trailing behind. Bubble was about to follow when Snowball said, "Hey, Bubble."

She jumped a bit. "What?"

"Have you seen Lightning?"

Bubble thought. "Not that I can remember. But didn't Four's letter say that everyone was recovered?"

"Yeah," Fanny agreed. "But I haven't seen him either."

"Huh. I wonder where he is?"

"Anything else?" Saw asked.

Taco took one last look at the paper, making sure to not shake off the tiny Ice Cube, who was sitting on her head. "Besides Four's signature, that's it, I think." She checked the back for anything she may have missed.

"Are you guys going to go?" Book asked.

Lollipop ignored her, but Saw didn't. "I'm definitely gonna go. I'm excited!" She repeatedly hopped from one leg to the other, giddy. "I've never been to a party before! This is going to be so much FUN!"

"I suppose I'm looking forward to attending," Lollipop said, directing herself at Saw instead of Book. "I'm not the biggest fan of Loser, but I've never been able to pass up an opportunity to go to a party. Tacoy, does it say anything about free food?"

Taco looked at her strangely. "Oh, wait, you mean actual free food, not the team. No, Four's letter doesn't mention it. But Loser knows the details." She folded up the note and stuck it inside her shell for safekeeping. "I think I also want to go."

"I've GOT to join!" Ice Cube agreed. Teardrop gave a thumbs up.

Book sighed. "Well, looks like I'm not wanted here." 'Head' hanging low, Book trudged away from the rest of her team. Taco almost said something to her as she passed, but hesitated for too long.

"You've got to talk to her someday," Icy said. Taco just nodded.

Book kept going until she reached the Losers, but Pin wasn't there. She turned to see a round, metal object sliding across the ground in her direction at high speed. "Coming through!" it shouted.

Book leapt back to avoid getting tripped by Coiny, who chuckled

maniacally and kept scooting away.

Pin paused next to Book to pant heavily. "Hello, Book. Don't mind Coiny, he's just being Coiny. What's up?"

Book sighed. "Oh, you know, the usual."

Pin glanced over at Gabop. "Hmm. You should definitely talk to Taco when you get a chance. But, if you want to hang out with us for a while, I'd be happy to have your company."

Book smiled. "Thanks."

"First, however, we have to catch that coin creature!"

Pin broke into a run and Book chased after the duo, grinning.

"Look at them," Donut said to Gelatin, almost condescendingly. He was indicating the large group of contestants and Exitors alike that surrounded Loser, fawning over him like he was some sort of god. "It's crazy. You'd think that the eliminated contestants at least would get tired of him, seeing as how they've been with him for a while now, but noooooo."

"Eh, he's not too bad," Gelatin shrugged.

"Well, I still don't get why they like him so much, even after he lied to us in episode 7," Donut complained. "Like, come on!"

"Calm down, Cherry D! It's not *that* big of a deal." Gelatin leaned on Donut. "Anyway, I take from your very vocal opinion on Loser that you're not attending the party."

"Actually, I think I will. I like parties - I'll probably just avoid him."

"Really? Awesome!" Gelatin pumped his fist. "We can be the Jelly Duo! Crashing parties all across Goiky!"

Donut sighed. "We're not even- you know what? Yeah. Sure."

"I'm gonna go see if I can convince Barf Bag to come!" Gelly rushed off, leaving Donut to observe the Loser-centric crowd on his own.

Suddenly, Donut noticed something. A familiar-looking book was sitting next to Loser on the ground. "Hey!" he yelled.

The Loser Fan Club stopped and looked at the jelly donut as he walked over to the lopsided cuboid. Donut pushed through the fanatics and snatched up his old diary with gusto. "That's MINE!" he said angrily.

"Hey, don't steal from Loser!" Remote pointed at Donut accusingly, as if he were the culprit instead.

"Yeah!" the general crowd agreed.

"Now, hold on," Loser said, holding his hands out and instantly shushing everyone. "That book is, in fact, Donut's. He just happened to leave it in the jawbreaker with me back in episode 7, when I got eliminated."

"You didn't read it, did you?" Some of Donut's anger had been replaced with worry.

Loser scoffed. "Oh, PSH. I would never read someone else's private property!"

"Phew." Donut was relieved. Feeling a bit awkward now, with several pairs of eyes watching him, he slipped out of the crowd as quickly as he could and walked away.

It wasn't until he was back with the rest of his team that Donut noticed the various colored post-it notes sticking out from his diary.

Lightning flew faster than he ever had before. Unwillingly as it may have been, he was reaching speeds that only Four could compete with. Yet, he would not reach his destination for several hours.

The charged bolt of energy fought against what was controlling his mind, and fought hard, but with no result. The binding on his brain

was just too much for him. He had his targets, with nothing he could do to stop himself from, well, targeting them.

By late night, Lightning would reach the competing grounds of BFB. And then the fun would truly begin.

Yeah, that last part was probably a bit too melodramatic, but I'm a sucker for that stuff lol

Anyway new book! I know I'm in the middle of IDFB:C, but this has been in the back of my mind for a while and I wanted to try it out. I'm not completely sure of the direction this is gonna take - it might be a straight storyline, or it could be a mix of that and maybe oneshots or something - but I'm excited to see what it evolves into. Hope y'all enjoy it!

Party Time!

"Come on, Golf Ball," Tennis Ball pleaded.

"No!"

"But *why?"*

"I already told you!" Golf Ball grumped. "I don't like parties. They're just a waste of time."

"But they can be fun!" Tennis Ball countered. "There's food, music, and lots of other people."

"I don't know if you've noticed, TB, but I'm not exactly the social type," Golf Ball said sarcastically.

"You don't have to actually talk to people!" Tennis Ball sighed. "Look, think about it this way. The competition's stressful, right?"

GB nodded. *"That* we can agree on."

"Well, parties can help a person relax. Unwind. I know you've been stressed lately, because of Basketball being an 'imposter,' and when BEEP flooded your underground factory with lava, so just... take a break! That's partially what parties are for."

Golf Ball considered this for several seconds. Tennis Ball was afraid he's somehow said something wrong when she finally replied. "Alright. I'll go. But only to see what a party is like!"

"Yay!" TB cheered.

Seven o'clock could not have come fast enough for the objects of Goiky. The sun was just beginning to set, and over three quarters of

the BFB cast was gathered outside the entrance to Loser's new mansion.

The oversized front doors creaked open, and out stepped a certain yellow cuboid. "LOSER!!" most of the crowd shouted enthusiastically. He waved out to everyone, then opened the doors wider. "Come on in, everyone! It's party time!"

"HOORAY!" They all almost trampled each other in their rush to get inside. It was a miracle that Bubble survived at all.

Objects quickly spread out to explore the mansion. It wasn't *ridiculously* huge, but it could have held all 64 contestants if everyone had attended. Most people congregated on the first floor, around the food and drinks table, while a bunch of others decided to go check out the second floor. Loser had carefully made sure not to serve any food that was already a contestant.

Despite the size of the mansion, both floors only held a few rooms each. The main entry room doubled as a living room, and that was where the largest amount of food and drinks were held. There were smaller snack stations dotted across the first floor, however. In the back of the living room was a DJ set and a karaoke stage, and there was even a disco ball hanging from the tall ceiling. There was also a fireplace with a roaring fire inside. Connected to the living room was a kitchen where Loser could prepare more food if needed, and down another hallway were a couple of arcade rooms.

The second floor had a couple of bedrooms, but as the mansion wasn't going to exist for more than a day, they were purely decorative. The rest of the second floor consisted of a few smaller rooms designed for people to go to escape the chaos of the party, and they were filled with various board games and card games.

A good chunk of the party was mostly small talk, going between rooms, people catching up with eliminated contestants, and a bit of dancing. But as the night went on, objects got bolder. So I'll skip the boring bit and get to the interesting stuff.

(insert timeskip lol)

A couple hours later

Concentrated Yoyleberry juice is different from most other foods made from Yoyleberries, in the sense that it doesn't turn the consumer into metal. Instead, concentrated Yoyleberry juice increases the amount of GABA and slows down your brain cells. It reduces your executive function, your judgement, your decision making. It makes you less inhibited and you're tempted to take more risks than you usually would.

In short, it makes you drunk if you drink too much. And that is exactly what Lollipop did.

The objects of Goiky almost never used it, or had any on hand. When Loser brought out the juice from the basement after a couple of hours, he expected the party attendees to be responsible in their usage of it. But some of them weren't.

Lollipop staggered from the kitchen into the living room and slid up to the DJ set at the back of the room, where Eraser was looking through some songs to play. "Hey, turn that music up!" Lollipop asked. Eraser obliged, turning up *Infetterence* to only slightly eardrum-bursting levels.

"That's what I'm talking about!" Lollipop started to walk away, then began to spin to the music while fist pumping repeatedly. She quickly got dizzy and tripped over a couch, landing on it so that she was upside down and face-to-face with Bubble. "Hello, Bubbubbubbly."

Bubble sighed. "Lollipop, you're drunk."

"No straw needed," the grape-flavored candy giggled. She then stuck out her pointer finger and popped Bubble. "Oopsie!"

"Lollipop!" Pencil scolded. "Don't ever, like, pop Bubble!"

"I'm NoT aFrAiD oF yOu," Lollipop said, her voice wobbling, before sliding onto the floor and promptly passing out. Pencil just sighed.

Saw and Taco walked up. "Alrighty, sleepyhead," Saw said as she

lifted Lollipop. "Let's get you upstairs." Taco joined in and together, they carried the woozy Lollipop out of the living room, almost getting tripped by Firey Jr. as he ran in.

"Hey, Ice Cube!" Jr called out. Icy turned to see who had called her name, only to find that the miniature flame had lifted her up. "What are you doing??" she yelled. Jr didn't respond. Instead, he tossed her right into the fire in the fireplace, melting her instantly.

Bracelety gasped. "How DARE you!" She grabbed Firey Jr. by one of his legs and stormed off in search of Teardrop, with Jr screaming all the way.

She ran into Firey. "FIREY!" she screeched.

Firey cringed at the sound of her voice. "Ah! What!"

"HAVE YOU SEEN TEARDROP?"

"Uh, no. I try to stay away from her, actually."

Bracelety grumbled and pushed past him to continue her search. A path cleared for a second, giving Firey a sightline to Leafy. When he spotted her, he automatically assumed a blank face, before realizing that she had her back turned to him.

The flame shook his head. *I didn't realize* she *was going to be here,* he thought. Suddenly, Coiny bumped into him and leaned against him. "Hey, Fir-aey." Coiny's speech was a bit slurred.

Firey noticed the cup in his hand and sighed. Glad for an excuse to leave the party, he said, "Come on, Coiny. You're a bit drunk. Let's get you out of here."

"Whaddya mean? I'm not-" Coiny hicupped. "-drunk! I'm just a lil' TPOT! I mean, a lil' teapot! I mean-"

"You're a little tipsy, I get it." Firey just picked up the copper coin and, holding him over his head, walked towards the front door. Coiny chuckled the whole way and accidentally dumped the rest of his juice on Remote as they passed by. "Hey!" Tree protested, annoyed that his friend had been doused in liquid.

"bztztzrtrbzzrbrtzt" Remote glitched.

"Uhh, Remote?" Tree sounded concerned. "Are you ok?"

Remote stopped glitching and powered down for a moment, but then quickly turned back on. "VIVA LA REVOLUTION!" she shouted. She then grabbed Rocky and tossed him through the nearest window, shattering the glass completely.

"What-" Tree exclaimed, but that was as far as he got before Remote grabbed him as well, lifted him over her head, and jumped through the window.

Loser came into the room just in time to witness this and put his hand to his head. "What in the world?" he hollered.

"Grassy will follow Rocky friend!" Grassy said cheerfully. He started to sprint towards the window, which still had sharp shards of glass around the frame.

"Grassy, no!" Loser dropped the tray he was holding and leapt to intercept Grassy, missing him by inches as the clump of greenery soared through the window. "Wheeeee!" he laughed.

Loser was about to head outside to get him when he noticed a commotion going on amidst the dancing. Pushing his way through the crowd, he just managed to see Liy rip Foldy in half. "Hey!" Stapy yelled at Liy. "Don't kill my friend!"

He jumped towards Liy, but Loser stepped in front of him. "What's going on here?" the cuboid demanded.

"Liy just ripped apart my friend Foldy for no reason!" Stapy wailed.

"I did NOT!" Liy protested. *"Foldy* started it by insulting me!"

"Calm down," Loser said. "There's no need to fight each other. I'm sure this can be resolved peacefully."

Stapy closed his eyes and took a deep breath. While he did that, Bracelety pushed him away to face Loser. "HAVE YOU SEEN TEARDROP?" she asked.

"Why do you want to find Teardrop?" Loser asked suspiciously, noting that Firey Jr. was being held hostage by Bracelety.

"I WANT TO EXTINGUISH FIREY JR," the bracelet said simply. "HE MELTED ICE CUBE!"

Loser's face morphed into an expression of anger, something that didn't happen often. "That's it. You four!" He quickly pointed in turn to Bracelety, Firey Jr, Stapy, and Liy. "Outside. Now."

They were all a little stunned, as they had never really seen Loser angry before. But the four of them reluctantly trudged out the front door. Loser spotted Cake trying to break up another fight between David and Dora and gestured for them to follow.

Loser walked out into the starry night, stopping in front of the tiny crowd of objects. A moment later, David and Dora joined the group, and Cake stood by Loser's side, whispering something into his ear. A couple dozen feet over, Tree was leading Remote away from the mansion while Grassy was playing with Rocky. Far off, the light of Firey was illuminating his path as he carried Coiny away.

Taking a breath, Loser did his best to not seem angry anymore. In actuality, he was furious at every one of them, but he had a reputation to keep. So he tacked down his emotions and put on a smile.

"Now," he started. "I know you are all good people. And I'm sure most of you had the best of intentions. But you can't just go and start fights in the middle of parties." He met Liy's eyes. "Liy, I know you don't like Stapy and Foldy, but that's no reason to kill one of them. If they start something, be the better person by not continuing it."

Cake nodded vigorously. "Yeah! What he said!"

Liy looked down, almost ashamed, as Loser turned his gaze to Bracelety and Firey Jr. "The same goes for you two. *Especially* since our only source of recovery won't return for a few days."

Bracelety gently set Firey Jr down and mumbled an apology.

Loser turned to the two humans. "David, Dora, I know of your

legendary rivalry-"

David hissed at the sound of Dora's name and Dora hissed right back.

"-but for tonight, at least, could you two at least just try to avoid each other? And if that's not possible for some reason, then just ignore each other. Getting into a fight isn't worth it. Got it?"

They nodded, then took a step away from each other.

"Good." Loser turned to the others again. "I'm not mad. But this is my party, and I would appreciate it if you respected-"

The sound of glass shattering suddenly came from behind him. He whirled around to see 8-Ball hurtle out of a second-story window and land with a *whump* on the dead grass a few feet away. Loser looked up and saw Golf Ball poking out of the shattered window. "That's what you get!" she screeched, right before a leg - presumably Tennis Ball's - grabbed her and pulled her inside.

Loser sighed. "Looks like I'll have to talk to other people now. Feel free to come inside whenever you want," he said, addressing the scorned group of objects he was talking to a moment earlier.

The yellow cuboid stepped up to the mansion and put his hand on the front door's handle...

When Lightning stopped flying, he stopped so abruptly that he almost lost his lunch. But he had a bit more control over his 'stomach' than his mind and managed not to barf Rocky-style.

He was hovering several dozen feet above Loser's mansion. Without warning, he dropped like a stone but stopped right before he would have hit the roof. Next to him, sticking out of the highest part of the roof, was a lightning rod.

He floated towards it, almost touching, then froze. He was doing his best to fight whatever had control over his mind and movements. The unknown force and Lightning were locked in combat for a solid minute, before Lightning succumbed. His body automatically kept

moving to the lightning rod. It prepared to zap, building up a bigger charge than ever before. Finally, Lightning shot down and slammed against the metal pole, unleashing all of the energy in one big blast of electricity.

"See, TB, I told you going to this party was a bad idea," Golf Ball grumbled.

"To be fair, you didn't have to throw 8-Ball out the window," Tennis Ball protested. "You could have just avoided him!"

GB sighed. "Let's just leave."

They were at the top of the stairs when the lights suddenly turned off. The music emanating from the living room cut out and was replaced by shouts of surprise and confusion. "What in the world?" TB said.

Suddenly, the halls were lit again, but the light source was coming from outside. Both sports globules turned and gawped at the shimmering wall of energy that had appeared out of nowhere.

The yellow cuboid stepped up to the mansion and put his hand on the front door's handle when a wall of light suddenly pushed him backwards. He tumbled down the front steps and landed on his feet. "What the heck?

A shimmering sphere of... *something* was surrounding the mansion. Cake went up and touched the barrier, but it blasted him backwards as well. He landed right next to Loser. "Loser! What's going on?" he cried.

"I..." Loser was at a loss for words, and he was about to say something he thought he'd never say. "I don't know."

The eleven objects outside stared in wonder as the energy globule wobbled dangerously. Then it dissipated, and the mansion collapsed in on itself.

Woah, Loser had a lot more focus than I initially thought he would

anyway cliffhanger time >:) this chapter may have been my all-time favorite to write so far haha

32 objects is a lot of objects to have superpowers. But some of them have generic powers - invincibility, invisibility, super strength, super speed, etc, and some of the powers are more unique, so I'll probably be focusing more on the latter.

I also haven't proofread this chapter yet I'll probably do that later ok bye

'Super' powers

"Oh my gosh! Loser! We have to do something!" Cake ran towards the front door and yanked down on the handle with his foot, but nothing happened. "The door's jammed!" he said frantically. "There must be rubble on the other side!"

"Stay calm, Cake. We'll get inside." Loser glanced at the window that Remote had thrown Rocky through earlier, but quickly saw that it, too, was covered by debris. The other windows weren't much help either. If anything, it seemed like that the front walls of the second floor had simply slid downward, slotting neatly into the mansion and blocking all exits.

How were they going to help the objects inside?

Needle gasped as the mansion began to shake and crumble around her. She almost fell over, and likely would have died if that happened, but she managed to grab onto the nearest doorframe. In a matter of seconds, wood snapped and split everywhere, falling onto the floor below. Needle clung to the doorframe and squeezed her eyes shut until the shaking and crashing had mostly stopped.

She carefully opened her eyes to look around. The air was thick with dust, but she could still see. Everything looked ruined. Pin, who had been with her moments ago, was nowhere to be seen.

Then she looked down and almost screamed. The bit of floor Needle was standing on, attached to the doorframe, was standing on its own - like a flagpole. All the floor and wall around it had collapsed. A dozen feet down, directly below her, was a full-sized mirror lying faceup on the ground, cracked but somehow intact.

She didn't dare move, but a groaning sound from above made her

look up just in time to see Lightning slowly float downwards, right past her.

"Lightning?" Needle asked. She reached out to grab him but just shocked herself, causing her to lose her grip and fall. She closed her eyes again, fully expecting to smash into the mirror and hear a shattering sound.

But it never happened.

Pin blinked. It took her a second to take in her surroundings, partially because she had just been knocked out for a minute, and partially because she was upside-down. *Oh great,* she thought. *I've been pinned again.*

She recognized Loser's mansion, but barely - it was in complete shambles. She could hear various objects nearby, talking and shouting at each other. Most of them sounded distressed or confused.

A pile of lumber nearby suddenly shifted, and Ruby and Gelatin emerged from underneath. "Hey! Ruby!" Pin called out. "Help!"

Ruby looked around. "Did you hear that, Gelatin?"

"Hear what?"

"Over here!" Pin said again.

Ruby froze. "Hear *that."*

"Ruby, lots of people are talking in another room."

"Yeah, but not in this room!"

"Hello?" Pin was aggravated. "We don't have the time for jokes, people! A building just collapsed around us!"

Ruby pointed a shaky finger in Pin's direction. "I- I think it came from over there!"

"Oh, for..." Pin muttered. She decided to just try to get herself unstuck. Wiggling back and forth, she managed to gain enough momentum to somehow pry the loose floorboard that she was stuck in out of the ground. "There we go!"

"Is- is that floorboard floating?" Ruby asked Gelatin nervously.

"I think we're d-dealing with... a g-ghost!" Gelatin stuttered.

"RUN!" the gemstone shrieked. She grabbed Gelatin by the hand and was gone. Literally. Pin blinked, and when she opened her eyes, two Ruby-and-Gelatin-shaped clouds of dust had replaced them.

What the heck is going on? Pin thought to herself. *Why couldn't they see me?*

Experimentally, Pin lifted a hand in front of her face. "Ahh!" she shouted. Her hand was invisible. Seeing a full-length mirror lying on the ground a few feet away, she quickly ran over and looked in it. "Ahh!" she exclaimed again. She couldn't see her own reflection, which meant... *she* was invisible.

As the shock of being see-through was already enough to set Pin's nerves on edge, you can imagine her reaction when Needle emerged from inside the mirror without warning.

"Uhnggg..." Golf Ball groaned. She spat out a pebble and jumped to her feet, quickly scanning her surroundings. *Ten seconds of observation could save my life,* she thought. She appeared to be trapped in some semi-deep pit filled with wooden barrels. There was a doorway on one wall, but it was completely blocked off with rubble. *The basement,* she thought. Water was leaking into the pit from somewhere, and voices were emanating from above. "Hello?" she called out.

A familiar fuzzy friend poked his face over the lip of the crater. "Golf Ball?" he asked.

"Tennis Ball! Oh, thank the place-where-golf-balls-are-created! Can you find some rope or something to get me out of this pit?"

"Alright! Be back soon!" He vanished.

GB glanced around the room again, but nothing had changed. She sighed. *It must be pretty useful to be tall right about now,* she thought. *Then I could just climb out of here...*

Tennis Ball hurried over to the largest group of objects in what was formerly Loser's living room. "Does anybody have any rope?" he shouted.

Several people nearby shook their heads. He witnessed a few other strange things. Bottle effortlessly picked up a huge pile of wood, saving Fries from underneath it. Taco was partially inside an intact wall. And Marker was lifting a large section of dirt out of the ground without touching it, making it float in the air. Earthbending?

But Tennis Ball just shook his head and continued his quest for rope. Leaving the living room, he went towards the arcade side. He did a comical double-take when he saw Needle talking to thin air, but then he spotted Lightning nearby her and rushed over. "Lightning, can you- ?"

But he stopped when he realized that Lightning was out cold. TB sighed and turned to keep looking. *I wish I had arms,* he fantasized.

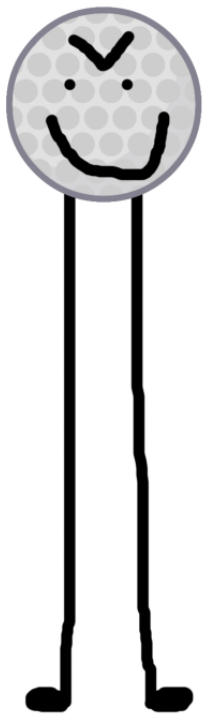
Suddenly, something felt odd. Not bad, just... new.

Out of nowhere, a black blob attached to a longer black line appeared and dangled in front of his face. "Aah!" he yelled, jumping back. The thing moved with him. "Wait..."

He flexed. The thing flexed, too. He tried to do a thumbs up, and the thing obliged. "No way..." He rushed over to the mirror lying next to Needle and checked his reflection. "I... I have arms!" he whooped excitedly.

Dropping the mirror and ignoring Needle's stares, TB sped over to the pit that Golf Ball was trapped in. Surprisingly, when he got there, her eyes were peeping over the rim. "GB, how'd you manage to get up?"

"Check this out!" Golf Ball lifted a leg - a very *long* leg - and climbed out of the hole in a single step.



"I can lengthen my legs at will!" GB said proudly. "I don't know what's brought on this change in my body chemistry to allow such an ability, but I wouldn't be surprised if it has something to do with that sphere of energy from earlier." Then she looked down and saw TB. "Since when did you get *arms?!*"

Balloony staggered away from the large metal pipe that had landed on his head and somehow not popped him. Leafy patted him on the back, then turned to the large crowd of objects assembled around them. "Is everyone here?"

"Uhh..." Book did a quick head count. "I see 29 people, me included."

"Don't forget me!" a patch of air piped up next to Needle.

"Ok then, 30 including Pin. I also vaguely remember some people jumping out a window earlier, before the mansion collapsed. But weren't there several others?"

"I saw Loser and Cake lead out a group earlier," Pie offered.

Eraser suddenly noticed something. It was faint, but definitely there. "Do you guys hear that?" He asked.

"Hear what?" Nickel wondered.

A moment of nearly-complete silence followed before Eraser heard it again. "I think someone's calling for help!"

"Nobody's calling for anything," Pencil scoffed.

But Eraser was sure he could hear a little voice saying, "Help!" He walked in circles to try to locate it and soon found an intact cup on the ground, half-filled with concentrated Yoyleberry juice. Inside it, Woody was floating on top of his emerald, but since he shrunk in BFB 15, he was so tiny that he couldn't climb out of the cup.

"Awwwwww!" Eraser cooed. "I forgot how small you were! Need help in there?"

"Yes! Please get me out!" Woody replied.

"Alright!" Eraser reached in, gently lifted Woody and the emerald out, then nearly dropped them both again as he realized that Woody had actually spoken coherently.

He rushed over to the others. "Guys! I found Woody! And you'll never believe this - he can actually talk!"

"No way," Match said. "That's, like, basically impossible."

"It's true!" Eraser insisted. "Go on, Woody! Say something!"

"Uhhh... hi... everyone?" Woody sounded nervous.

Match wasn't impressed. "Yeah, no. I'm only, like, hearing his usual scaredy-cat 'wah-wahs.'" The others murmured agreement.

"Huh?" Eraser was confused. "Why can only I understand him?"

Woody just shrugged.

"So then that brings our group count to 31," Book continued.

"Make that 33!"

Everyone turned to see Saw walk into the room with a woozy Lollipop leaning against her. The candy appeared to still be drunk. "How do youuuu do, buckaroos?" Lollipop asked the general crowd, shooting finger guns at them.

Book grunted, annoyed. "33 then. Does anyone else have any additions to make?" Nobody said anything. "Good. Then we should try to get out of this ruined mansion."

"As long as I don't have to do any physical work, I'm fine with- whoops!" Pencil slipped on a puddle of water and fell backwards, her eraser scraping against the wall as she fell. "Ow..."

As Match helped Pencil get up, Golf Ball studied the section of wall that Pencil rubbed against. "Interesting." She would have scratched her chin if she had arms, or a chin. "Pencil, it appears your eraser actually erased something for once."

"Whaddya mean?" Pencil complained. "My eraser always erases stuff!"

"What about 'stuff' that's not on paper?"

"Huh?" Pencil peered over GB's head and saw that there was an empty space where there was once wood. "Cool! I can erase things other than Me marks!"

TV suddenly flashed a warning on his screen. *Unsafe structure,* it said. And indeed, there was an unsafe structure. The part of wall that Pencil erased was actually a support pillar that lead up to an intact part of the ceiling. But now that most of the support had been taken out of the pillar, it couldn't hold the weight of that section of ceiling for much longer. And that very section was directly above Teardrop.

"Teardrop!" Pin yelled. "Look out!"

TD whipped her head around as the support pillar finally snapped, sending several tons of wood hurtling down towards her. Needle ran forward, but even she wasn't fast enough to get there in time.

At the last second, Lollipop thrusted out both of her hands towards Teardrop and drunkenly said, "Hi-yah."

In a flash, a shimmering barrier of purple energy formed around TD in a spherical shape, not unlike the one that had surrounded the building minutes earlier. Every bit of wood and rubble bounced off the shield, making no dent in it whatsoever.

Lollipop lowered her hands and the bubble disappeared. Teardrop looked just as stunned as all the others did. The candy gave a shaky thumbs up. "And *that,* ladies and gentlemen, is how it's done."

"What the heck is going on here?" Clock exclaimed, extremely confused. "First, the power goes out. Then, this weird bubble of *something* surrounds the mansion, and right after that, it collapses on us. Now various people have, what- superpowers?"

"I wouldn't exactly call mine a 'superpower,' but I get what you're trying to say," Golf Ball said. "Some strange events have happened tonight, and I, for one, can't wait to examine them in closer detail!"

"But shouldn't we try to get out of this place first?" Tennis Ball inquired. "Not only is it a serious hazard to all of our lives, but it's a mess!"

"I don't think we, like, have to worry about finding a way out of here," Match said.

Everyone looked at Pencil, who was picking at her fingers, not paying attention. She looked up. "What?"

Loser squinted and was relieved to see Cake in the distance, leading Black Hole towards the mansion. He of all people would be able to unblock the front doors.

The pale yellow cuboid turned towards said doors just in time to see the center of one of them disappearing before his very eyes. As he watched in wonder, a space appeared, revealing that Match had carved out the hole by holding Pencil and erasing the door from existence. "Aw, yeah!" she cheered, leading the others out.

Lollipop quickly pushed past everyone, almost knocking Loser off the stairs that led to the entrance, and vomited violently on the dead grass. "What the heck happened in there?" Loser asked.

Naily materialized next to him, causing him to jump in fright. "Oh man," she chuckled. "Where do we even start?"

hehe

TALL BALL

sorry I just can't stop laughing at it it's such a stupid concept

TALL BAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAALL

({ [LOG: 001] })

[Commence recording. Date: December 21st, 2019.]

After a week of work, it is done. 62 of the subjects have been successfully contained. The last one is, of course, impossible to contain by any normal means, but he has been dealt with and will not be a bother. Even that accursed number and his variable friend are now under our control.

As of now, only six subjects have been experimented with. I have selected a few other potential candidates, but the final number of experiments I will be conducting is currently unknown.

Listed below are the first subjects and results of the abilities my experimentation brought to them.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 053]

The purpose of Subject 053's experiment was to see if the power of the mind could be expanded. While most minds can do nothing more but think, 053's mind can now think about other's thoughts as well. In short, he can read minds. To an extent. His newfound brainpower also includes the ability to perform minor telekinesis.

This particular endeavor is risky, but I believe that if we are cautious, this mind-over-matter concept could be the next step for everyone.

~~~~~

[SUBJECTS 010 and 016]

These two subjects have been grouped together for now, as they not only

have similar abilities, but close contact with each other brings more positive reactions from them both than if they were alone. Particularly the smaller one.

Subject 016 has been given the ability to lengthen her legs at will. We believe the limit is around 50 feet, but that is simply because the tallest room we currently have is only that tall. It's quite possible that she can go even higher.

As for Subject 010, he can create several pairs of arms for himself, as well as get rid of them, whenever he wishes to. The limit of how many arms he is able to create at once is unknown.

While it is true that robotic limbs already exist, creating an alternative limb enhancement that enhances actual, genuine limbs could work out well for those who are lacking some.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 023]

The idea for Subject 023's ability is simple. To make him impossible to kill. So far, testing is going smoothly, but we have not yet tested nearly all the ways it would normally be possible for him to die to.

As he is relatively weak normally, this would be a great help for him in his daily life. I am unsure yet if the solution we added to 023 would work on someone like me, but if I can get it to work on substances other than rubber, it would help a lot of people. And it would likely make me unstoppable.

Note: this solution, the one that has so far made Subject 023 immune to several types of damage, does NOT make him immune to pain.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 020]

Subject 020's ability is yet another simple one - she can become transparent. Results have shown that her physical body is still there, and can interact with the world as normal. Obviously, however, she cannot be seen by normal eyes.

Invisibility would be useful for situations that required stealth, such as breaking into a bank, or stealing a friend's Halloween candy. I do love Himshey bars...

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 017]

Subject 017 has what is possibly the most unique ability yet. After some intense experimentation, she can now travel between mirrors as if they were portals, able to get from one place to another without being seen, much like Subject 020. Below is a direct account of 017's experience with her new power.

"It's like... I'm not sure how to describe it. There's this... void, I suppose, behind the mirrors. There's nothing but white and the shapes of other mirrors. Whenever I enter it, I'm basically stepping into another world. Gravity still applies, but I don't need to breath. I don't get cold, and I don't get hot, either. In fact, I can't feel... anything. Physically, that is. I've tried touching the 'ground,' and my hands and feet hit it like normal and stop moving, but I can't actually FEEL it. It's all just so... strange."

Needless to say, I believe this "mirror void" needs to be looked into more.

~~~~~

These results certainly proved to be very interesting indeed. I am looking forward to choosing more subjects and performing experiments on them to see what else I can discover.

[End recording.]

haha lore go brrrrrrr

next chapter will be longer I promise

Vomit Karma

The next few minutes were certainly interesting.

As most of the alive contestants/Exitors who hadn't attended the party followed Black Hole and Cake to the ruined mansion, the late night air was filled with a flurry of stories being exchanged and powers being shown off. Ruby could be seen running circles around various groups of people and then zooming away to annoy others. Bottle was lifting several objects at once to test her newfound super strength. Even Match and Pencil - neither of which was very popular among most of the contestants - were gathering a crowd by showing off Pencil and having her erase bits and pieces of the ground.

The last one out of the mansion was Balloony, who was carrying an unconscious Lightning. Because his rubber body didn't conduct electricity, he was immune to Lightning's zapz.

"Woah." Cloudy floated over to them. "What happened to *him?"*

"I don't know," Balloony admitted. He set Lightning down on the ground. "I didn't even realize he was at the party!"

Tennis Ball overheard and walked over. "I can take him over to Golf Ball's underground factory to make sure he's ok."

Cloudy was confused. "What good would you be able to do to him in a factory?"

"Well, it's sort of a factory-laboratory mixture."

"Oh."

Tennis Ball grabbed one of Lightning's arms and gingerly lifted him into the air, but then got bowled over by Ruby. She sped past Balloony and Cloudy and almost knocked over Coiny. "Hey, watch it!"

he complained.

"Sorryyyyyyyyyyy!" Her voice faded away.

Coiny just shook his head and completed his path over to Needle. "Needle! Thank goodness you're alright. Where's Pin?"

"Right here!" Pin's voice piped up.

Coiny whirled around, but he couldn't see her. "Ok, nice impression, Needy. But seriously, where is she?"

The slap echoed around the field. "DON'T call me NEEDY! And Pin IS here! She's just invisible!"

Pin briefly flickered into existence, startling Coiny, then disappeared again. "I've been trying to turn visible for a while now, but it's never permanent." She sighed.

Coiny felt around until he poked his finger on Pin's point, then rested his hand on her head. "Hey, I'm sure you'll get it! You just need to keep trying."

"Thanks."

Coiny suddenly felt nauseous. With all the running around looking for Pin a moment ago, he'd forgotten that he had got tipsy on Yoyleberry juice earlier. "Uh oh..." With almost no time to react, he barfed all over Pin, neatly outlining her.

"Uhggg!" Needle complained. "Coiny!"

Coiny wiped his mouth. "Oh gosh, I'm so sorry!"

Pin just spat and sighed again. "It's fine. I suppose I deserved that for barfing on Woody in season 1."

Meanwhile, Golf Ball observed everything from a distance, trying to pick order from the chaos. But there was simply too much chaos. So she decided to extend her legs and tower over all the others. "EVERYONE, PLEASE PAY ATTENTION!" she shouted.

They all stopped talking and turned towards her. Several people gaped at her unnaturally long legs. *Huh,* she thought. *That doesn't usually work.*

"Tonight has been... eventful, to say the least." She heard mutters of agreement. "I'm sure you are all extremely confused right now, because I am as well. But I'm going to try to figure out what exactly happened here. So for a moment, would all the objects who *were* in the mansion when it collapsed please form a separate group from the objects who *weren't*?"

They complied and began to shuffle around. Golf Ball waited until two groups had formed before shrinking her legs, pulling out a notepad, and quickly scribbling down the names of the party attendees. "Alright," she said after a moment, stashing the notebook away. "Thank you for your time. At some point during this week, I will be calling you all down into my factory one by one to examine you and determine if anything about your body structure has changed, and if it has, what has changed."

A voice spoke up from the crowd. "What if we don't *want* to be examined?" Blocky.

Tennis Ball set Lightning on the ground and stepped forward. "I'm sure you've all noticed, but several people have suddenly gained strange new... powers. It's quite possible that *everyone* who was inside the mansion when that enormous energy sphere surrounded us now has a unique ability." He glanced at the red cube peeking out from the group. "That would include *you,* Blocky."

Excited murmurs rose from the gathering of objects as they began to imagine what abilities they could possibly have. Well, besides the ones who already knew what they could do.

"Again, thank you all for your time," Golf Ball said loudly. "Good night!" She gestured to Tennis Ball and walked off in the direction of her underground factory. TB picked Lightning up by his arms again and followed her.

Book watched them go, then detached herself from the rest of the group. Finding a nice burnt tree away from the hubbub of the other objects, she sat down beside it, opened herself up, pulled out a pencil (an inanimate one), and began to write her latest entry. Because of course, in addition to being an HPHPRCC manual, a dictionary, and a BFDI guidebook (among other things), she was also a journal. She usually wrote her entries earlier in the night, but the party had prevented her from doing so that night.

"Dear me," Book mumbled to herself as she wrote. "Today has been extremely hectic. It all started when Four returned the eliminated contestants..." She continued to write and talk for a minute, explaining Four's note in detail.

Then she reached the part where the mansion appeared from thin air. "After Taco read the part about the mansion, it appeared and dropped down on top of Gaty, crushing her-"

Gaty popped into existence next to Book, startling her. "Aah!!" She dropped her pencil and quickly shut her cover, hiding her newest entry.

"Oh. Hello, Book," Gaty said unpleasantly. She looked around. "Where's Four? And what's that random mansion doing here? Is this part of a challenge?"

Book calmed her breathing and stood up. "I... uh, I think I just recovered you."

"Huh??"

Book thought for a moment. She grabbed the pencil, opened herself up again, and quickly jotted down Bubble's name. In a flash, Bubble was suddenly standing next to Gaty.

"Hoo, boy." Book closed herself once more, then looked over at the mansion in the distance. "You guys have missed a *lot."*

"So you think you're invincible?" Cloudy asked.

"Maybe," Balloony responded. He rubbed the back of his head. "That pipe certainly didn't kill me, although it *did* hurt. I don't want to test it again until I know I can be recovered."

"Everyone! Good news!" Book ran into the clearing with Gaty and Bubble. "I just found out that I can recover people by writing their name on my pages!"

The two friends and teammates looked at each other. Balloony shrugged. "Why not? Hey, Naily!" he called out.

Naily materialized behind him. "Omae wa, mo shindeiru."

Balooony turned around, surprised. "What?"

She chuckled. "Sorry, I just had to say that. What's up?"

"I need you to, uh... stab me." Balloony twiddled his fingers awkwardly. It *was* a strange request, after all.

"Sure! I love stabbing things!" Without warning, Naily teleported herself several feet into the air above Balloony, then quickly flipped around so that her sharp end was pointing downward. Gravity took hold and drove her straight into the balloon's head.

She made it quite far without popping him - Balloony felt her tip push the top of his rubber head to the point where it almost touched the bottom part - but somehow, he survived. The air in his cranium forced Naily away and caused her to flop on the ground. She stood up and turned around. "Awww!" She seemed disappointed. "I'm going to try again!"

"No!!" Balloony shouted frantically. "Er, I mean..." He regained his composure. "You actually did a good job, but I was just testing something. So thanks."

"Well, anytime you need something else stabbed, just call for me!" She then warped away to go cause pain for someone else.

Cloudy watched her go. "Naily is a very stabby individual," he commented.

Balloony nodded in agreement. "Yeah. I think she's impaled Woody a couple times." He suddenly clapped his hands to the sides of his head, distressed. "Oh my air pump! Woody!"

"What about him?"

"He was at the party, but I completely forgot about him! Wooooooodyyyy!!" Balloony ran off, yelling Woody's name. Cloudy floated after him.

They passed Marker, who had just trapped Liy in an earthen cage. "Go, Marker!" Stapy cheered. "Punish that Foldy-killer!"

"W-wait," Liy stuttered as Marker shrunk the cage around her. "L-let's think about this!"

"Nah, I think you deserve this." Stapy glanced over at Teardrop, who was watching nearby. "Don't you think so, Teardrop?"

"Yup! Liy should be punished for both her recent and previous actions," Teardrop responded.

"Cool, cool- *wait."* Stapy's jaw dropped open as he realized what just happened. Marker lost his concentration in surprise and Liy's prison crumbled. Even Teardrop herself looked startled.

Liy just chuckled. "Knew it." Then she used the opportunity while everyone was distracted to sneak away from Marker and Stapy.

Ruby zipped over, holding Flower over her head. "HOLD THE PHONE," Flower screeched. "DID TEARDROP JUST *TALK??"*

"Yup!" TD said in Ruby's voice.

"That's so cool! Hang on. Ruby, put me down." The gem dropped Flower. "Teardrop, you just spoke in Ruby's voice. How-"

TD shrugged. "I dunno," she said, using Flower's voice and cutting her off. The petalled prissy tried to keep speaking, but it was like SHE was mute now. "It looks like my new ability is to 'steal' someone else's voice and use it myself."

Stapy realized that when Teardrop had first spoken a minute ago, she sounded exactly like Liy. The shock of Teardrop speaking at all had made him forget that.

"This is awesome!" Teardrop said, matching Marker's accent perfectly. "I'm gonna go insult a bunch of people I don't like and swear in front of Grassy!" She rushed off excitedly.

"Hmf," Flower pouted. "I just wish I knew what *my* power was."

"I'm sure you'll figure it out!" Ruby confided.

Later that night (technically really early next morning)

Thirst awakened Tennis Ball from his slumber. Yawning, he rolled (literally) out of his bed in Golf Ball's factory and attempted to make his way to the water tap in the dark. But the turning of pages caught his attention. He glanced into the next room - Golf Ball's bedroom - to see the bossy bot herself sitting amidst a large pile of books, a flashlight pointing down onto the pages.

"Golf Ball?" He yawned again. "Are you really *still* researching at this ungodly hour?"

"Science never sleeps!" GB harrumphed. "And yes, I'm still trying to discover something about our new abilities. But there's absolutely nothing. In our ten years of existence, an event like this has never occurred before anywhere else in the world. The only thing similar to our situation is in a fiction book, where the characters' superpowers are caused by some sort of meteor."

Tennis Ball blinked. An arm emerged from him, rubbed his eyes, and vanished again. "I'd be happy to help you look some more. But not right now. It's 2am - please just get some sleep."

He left the room. GB glanced back down at the page she was reading from a science journal, then sighed. Reluctantly, the sports globule closed the book, turned off the flashlight, and climbed in bed, instantly falling asleep.

A nice peaceful chapter ending :)

A couple more abilities have been revealed hehe, TD's was very entertaining to write

don't really have much else to say here so yeah stay safe and all that good stuff

Anger Issues

"Hey, Leafy! It's been so long. Welcome [back!]"
- Coiny, BFB 11

The next morning

"So, how exactly does your power work?" Balloony asked Eraser. They were sitting next to Cloudy's collection together, with tiny Woody sitting on Balloony's head. He was careful not to move too much so that the balsa slab could stay there.

Eraser shrugged. "It's a bit weird. On the surface, I swear that Woody is speaking English. But if I listen harder, I can hear his regular wah-wahs; I just somehow... understand them."

"Wah wah... (Well, I-I'm glad that someone can finally really understand me,)" Woody said nervously, clutching his emerald.

"Yeah, it's nice." Eraser chuckled. "I can't believe I ever used to think you were uncool. Naily told me what you did in episode 14 - that takes some guts, bro!"

Woody smiled. "Wait, what exactly happened?" Balloony wondered. "I died when Woody found his emerald, so I don't know-"

Naily teleported to them, making all three objects jump in surprise. "It was AWESOME, Balloony! After the lava got you..." She launched into her tale with gusto.

Meanwhile, from a dozen feet away, Lollipop groaned as she lay on the field's dead grass. "Seriously, people. Could you *please* try to be a little quieter? I've got a killer headache right now."

"That's your own fault from drinking too much," Eraser commented.

Lollipop groaned again, but couldn't deny that. Then an idea struck her. "Hmm..." She sat up and slowly raised her hands, trying to concentrate through her migraine.

A wobbly semi-circle of energy materialized and surrounded the group of four. Naily continued to blabber on, not caring. "Drat," Lollipop muttered. "It's not soundproof. A shame." She let the barrier fall and closed her eyes again.

"IF YOU WANT YOURSELF PROTECTED FROM LOUD NOISES, THEN MAYBE TRY OUT OUR REVOLUTIONARY EARMUFFS!"

The new, constantly loud voice caused Lollipop to wince and crack open a single eye. Yellow Face was standing patiently next to her. "It's scary that you're actually making me consider buying one of your horrendous products."

Someone cleared their throat. Groaning for the third time, Lollipop shifted over to see Tennis Ball. She almost did a double take when she saw him with arms, then remembered last night's events. "What do *you* want?"

"I was hoping you could spare some of your time to tell me about your, er, ability." TB continued to explain as he pulled out a notebook. "GB and I are trying to learn as much as we can."

Lollipop waved him away. "I'll participate in your studies later. Right now, I have a splitting headache to take care of."

"Fair enough." Tennis Ball stashed his writing pad away and walked off, finally allowing Lollipop some peace and quiet, as Eraser and the others had gone somewhere else as well. She closed her eyes and-

She opened them again. Yellow Face hadn't moved an inch. "Are you *really* still here?"

Golf Ball muttered to herself as she scratched down 'super strength' next to Bottle's name. "...yet she still seems as fragile as ever. Heh,

almost like a glass cannon..."

She spotted Book across the field and briskly strode toward her. "Oh, hello GB," the dictionary said when she noticed the scientist.

"You were at the party. Do you know if you have an ability?" Golf Ball asked, getting straight to the point.

"Yes, actually! I can recover dead objects if I write their name on my pages!"

GB gasped. "That's great! I was worried about us not having a source of recovery until Four returned. Do your best to not die until then!"

"Always good advice."

"Do you know if there are any limitations to this yet? Side effects?"

Book shook her head. "I've recovered four or five others now and haven't felt any different."

GB wrote this down. "If you've recovered any objects with a power, did they retain their abilities?"

"I haven't recovered anyone with powers yet."

"Alright." Golf Ball looked up. "Thank you for your time! At some point later on, I will likely call you down into my factory for further testing."

"You're welcome. I should be free at basically any time, since... well... my team doesn't really wanna talk to me anymore."

Golf Ball wasn't sure what to say to that, so she simply coughed and briskly walked away before the silence got *too* awkward.

Flower glumly watched Basketball as she messed around with her powers. The orange sphere had discovered earlier that day that she could manipulate the gravity levels of other objects - both inanimate and living - and now she, Blocky, Grassy, and 8-Ball were bouncing

around like they were on the moon.

The plant thought for a moment, then got up and slowly walked towards the quartet. 8-Ball noticed her first. "Oh, hello there."

"Hey..." Flower coughed. "Uh, I was wondering if I was able to... join you? You guys look like you're having fun.."

Basketball landed on her feet and turned around. "I think I could-"

"I don't know," Blocky interrupted. He glanced at Flower suspiciously. "I've known her longer than you have, and she's not the nicest contestant."

Flower sighed. "Come on. I'm trying to make up for that!"

"Not sure I can believe that."

"Why, you..."

Flower took a step forwards, but Blocky didn't flinch. In fact, he just smiled. "See? You still have violent tendencies. Now, stay away from us and Grassy and head back to your crummy team."

"Arg!" Flower took another step and raised her fist. Blocky's grin vanished, instantly replaced with a look of anger. "Don't even try me."

Basketball tried to mediate from the sidelines. "Blocky, don't you think you're being a bit harsh?"

"Not going to lie, I kind of want to see this fight."

"8-Ball!!"

Flower's vision began to turn red. She had been better at controlling her anger recently, but something about Blocky was ticking her off more than usual. She clenched her fists and prepared to throw hands.

A gust of wind blew in from somewhere, and Blocky's expression of anger quickly turned into one of fear. He took a step backwards, then thought better of it and stood his ground. "Blocky, stop!" Basketball yelled. "You're not going to win against *that!"*

Huh? Flower wondered through her furious haze.

"Your Fanny act isn't scaring me!" Blocky said, clearly nervous but still deciding to stay put.

"What in the world are you talking about?"

Blocky slowly lowered his hands, none of them noticing yet that one of them had changed. "What do you mean? Your petals are spinning like crazy! They're like electric saw blades!"

Perplexed, Flower's anger died away as she reached out to touch one of her petals, but somehow cut herself. She jerked her finger away as the wind began to die down. "No way."

"They were *definitely* spinning like Fanny's blades," 8-Ball confirmed. He glanced at Blocky and his brow furrowed. "Uh, Blocky..."

"What?"

"Your arm is... I don't even know."

"What? What is it??" Everyone else looked at his right arm and gasped. From the elbow to the hand, it had transformed into some sort of blaster weapon. "Woah! This is... wow! Hang on."

He quickly raised it at Flower and fired. A large red laser shot out of the cannon and blasted her in the face, obliterating her completely. He lowered his smoking arm. "That. Is. So cool! I can pull so many pranks with this!"

8-Ball and Grassy cheered. *Oh, dear,* Basketball thought to herself.

~~~~~~~~~~
~~~~~~~~~~

SURPRISE! After exactly 8 months of no updates, *Powerless* is finally back!!

It feels weird to be writing this again, but I'm really happy to be doing it. And you don't have to worry about me not being prepared this time.

Plus, school will be easier for me until it's over, and my summer isn't as free as I would have liked but definitely an improvement.

(Please note that planned out does not mean all the chapters are written yet. I'll be writing them whenever I feel like it.) I haven't even revealed all of the powers yet lol. Looking forward to seeing what you guys will think!

- Jabe

He's Lying

Taco carefully snuck forwards. If she was correct, Teardrop was on the patio in front of the bathroom buildings, while Taco was at the back. Slowly and quietly, she placed a hand on the wall in front of her and concentrated. Her hand passed right through.

Grinning, Taco pushed the rest of her body through, then continued forward and peeled out the front. Yup - Teardrop was there, none the wiser. Taco took a deep breath and yelled, "BOO!!"

Teardrop leapt straight up into the air and landed on her butt. "Hey!" she spoke in Taco's voice, annoyed. "That wasn't funny!"

"Drat," Taco said, her laughter cut off. "I forgot you could do that."

"Well, *I* forgot you could do *that!"*

"This is so weird. I feel like I'm having a conversation with myself."

"I feel weird just having a conversation."

"IIIIIIIIINCOMIIIIINGG!" a new voice yelled. Both girls glanced to the left just in time for Ruby to barrel straight into Teardrop, her super speed sending both of them flying. Taco just shook her head and pulled her body out from the wall. "All these powers are gonna take some getting used to."

"I've already gotten used to them."

Taco turned again, startled. Somehow, Pillow had managed to sneak up on her. "Really? Already?"

"Yeah. Being able to see the future helps a lot."

"Woah woah woah, back up." Taco needed a second. "You can tell the *future?"*

"Yes, it's quite interesting! But only by a day at most." Abruptly, Pillow started to walk away, then turned back to Taco. "Oh yeah. Watch out."

She strolled off. *What?* Taco wondered, just before a laser beam sliced her in half. "Sorry, Taco!" Blocky called out from far across the field.

Donut leaned against the half-intact tree by Cloudy's collection, meticulously removing the colored sticky notes which pinpointed various bits and pieces of his diary. As it was a fragile book, he didn't want to accidentally damage it, but that only made the process slow.

A shadow from behind loomed over him, and he sighed. "Gelatin, for the last time, I don't want to see your magnetism right now-"

Whoever was behind him cleared their throat, and Donut realized it was *not* Gelatin. He turned around and almost leapt out of his 'skin' when he saw Loser standing there, hands folded behind his back. "Hello, Donut," he said in his scratchy voice.

Donut recovered quickly. "Uh, hello?" he said back awkwardly. "Don't scare me like that."

"Sorry," Loser said. "I just came by to right a wrong."

"Huh?"

Loser pointed to Donut's diary. "The other day, when I said that I never read your book, that was... a lie."

"Hah!" Donut burst out. "I knew it!"

"I wanted to apologize both for the deception and for the invasion of privacy," Loser continued, unfazed. "I had a moment of weakness while trapped inside that jawbreaker and simply couldn't help myself. As for the deception, well, I have to keep my reputation intact, you know." He extended his hand and smiled warmly. "Truce?"

Instinctively, Donut almost reached out to shake hands, then hesitated. Loser sounded genuine, he really did. But something

(he's lying he's not sorry at all)

told him that Loser was, in fact, not genuine. So Donut retracted his hand and tried for a smile. "Sure. Truce. I don't do handshakes, though." *Two can play the liar's game,* he thought to himself.

Loser nodded understandingly and retracted his own hand. "Did you, uh," Donut continued, afraid to ask. "Did you see anything about... Bomby in there?"

The cuboid glanced at him curiously. "Not that I can recall. I only skimmed about eighty percent of the book and put those sticky notes down for later, only to remember that it wasn't appropriate to read someone else's secrets and put the diary down. Why?"

(HE'S LYING HE'S LYING)

"Just wondering."

so uh

I read *Carrie* recently

anyway sorry for the shorter chapter, I've got another planned to release semi-soon

({ [LOG: 002] })

[Commence recording. Date: January 10th, 2020.]

Ah, 2. My favorite number.

Progress has been slower as of late, but time is of no worry. When the last log was created, 6 subjects have been experimented with. Now, a total of 14 have been "tweaked" with.

Listed below are the 8 new subjects and results of the abilities my experimentation brought to them.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 044]

Subject 044 has been quite a hassle to deal with. I gave her the ability to move at an exceptionally increased speed at will.

This proved to be a mistake. The other day, she broke loose of her containment and nearly managed to free the other subjects, and would have likely succeeded had it not been for my loyal assistant. If I were paying him, I would have given him a raise.

Fortunately, we discovered that a standard syringe filled with one dosage of "freeze juice" is enough to slow 044 down to normal speed. Also fortunately, Subject 056 appears to have a vast supply of freeze juice, so we will not run dry any time soon.

Note: reverse-engineer freeze juice to learn formula later.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 028]

The idea for Subject 028 came to me after 044's unfortunate escapade - I needed to come up with contingency plans for every possible scenario in case something goes wrong. This includes recovery.

The current method of recovery I am using for my subjects is reliable, but accidents happen, and I did not want to be left with no method of bringing my subjects back. So now, if any deceased subject's name is written on any of Subject 028's pages, they will be recovered, abilities and all.

Every good scientist should have a contingency plan.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 013]

I'll admit. After the whole mess with Subject 044, and working hard to create backup plans for various scenarios, I wanted to have some creative amusement with the next subject. This led to me making Subject 013's ability to turn his right arm into a laser cannon. That's it. He seems to enjoy it.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 056]

Unlike the previous experiments, this one is not related to Subject 044, despite how useful Subject 056 has been in that matter.

Intense experimentation has made him able to manipulate magnetic fields to his will. He suggested this himself due to his love of forks, and I decided to oblige. It's certainly had some interesting results. It is currently unknown whether he can manipulate the planet's poles or not, and truthfully, I do not wish to find out.

Note 2: conduct any experiments with Subject 056 in his containment cell, and remove any and all metal from body before entering.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 024]

This subject is difficult to work with. Not like in the case of Subject 044,

but because of what she is made of. It's a task to attempt to experiment with her without inadvertently damaging her to the point of necessary recovery.

Nevertheless, I have managed to succeed. Subject 024 can now control water at will. I have dubbed this power "waterbending." She appears to also be able to manipulate liquids that have large quantities of water.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 036]

Before the periodic table, it was believed that there were only four elements - water, earth, fire, and air. In reality, there are 118 elements, but I've always amused myself with the idea of the simple four. Which is why Subject 036, as well as my next three subjects, will follow the pattern of "bending" - just like Subject 024 in the previous entry.

Subject 036 can now "earthbend." Using his mind, he can perform feats such as lifting up dirt and/or rock from the ground, propel it with a massive amount of force, or simply change its shape in any way he desires.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 005]

This experiment was particularly dangerous, but so far, nothing disastrous has happened. After all, I needed to fireproof the facility from Subjects 001 and 054. Nonetheless, I took the proper precautions just in case, and so far it has paid off.

Subject 005 has the ability to "firebend." She can conjure flame from thin air and pyrokinetically control it. She is also able to control already existing fire.

Note 3: their new ability does not make them immune to fire.

Note 4: do NOT let Subject 005 anywhere near my assistant.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 019]

For the final experiment in this pattern, I gave Subject 019 the ability to "airbend" - a power which allows her to control any gas at will. She's already become quite adept at using it to make herself float around.

I don't think I'm going to be doing any more "element" bending. Some of the real elements are quite... volatile.

~~~~~

This set of results was much more frustrating to achieve with all the complications, but still satisfying when I finished. I have not yet narrowed down the final number of subjects which will have powers, but I have managed to cross a few off the list of potential receivers.

[End recording.]

Planning

Scritch scratch, scribble scribble. These soft, quiet sounds filled Golf Ball's and Tennis Ball's ears as the sporty scientists descended the spiral staircase that led into the infamous underground factory. The sounds were from Tennis Ball jotting down notes and organizing information on both of their notepads. With his new arms, he was able to actually write and walk at the same time, which left Golf Ball free to ponder about everybody's mysterious new abilities.

The sound of their footsteps changed slightly, transitioning from stair metal to floor metal, as they reached the bottom. They went directly over to the nearest, clearest table (most items in the room were covered by large amounts of paper sheaves or other junk) to prepare for analysis.

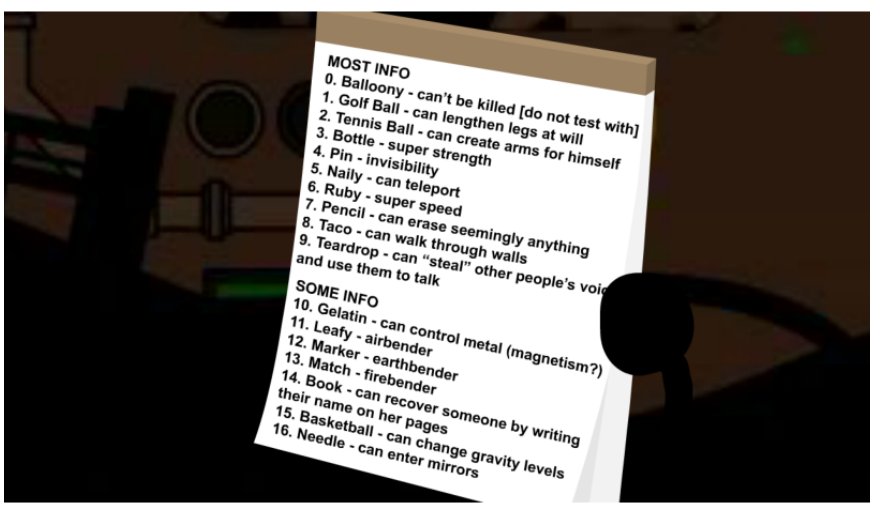
Golf Ball hopped up onto the stool which allowed her to reach the top of the table before remembering that she no longer needed it. She slid off and simply extended her legs instead, rising to approximately Tennis Ball's height. "How close are you?" her raspy voice queried.

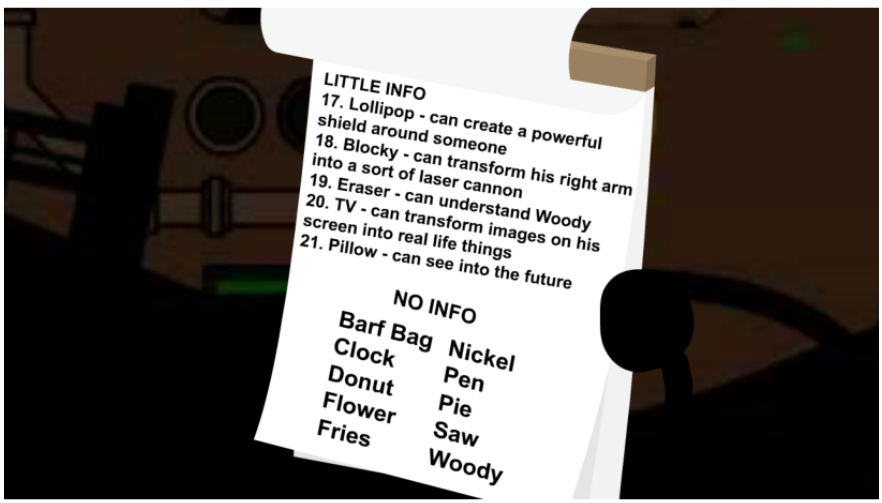
"Almost done," TB replied. "There's a lot to unpack here." He wrote for another minute, took one last look at everything, and nodded. "Okay! I think it's all sorted. Take a look at-"

He finally glanced up from his notes and paused. There were only legs standing in front of him. "Um." He continued to look upwards until he spotted Golf Ball's spherical body near the roof of the factory, far, far above him. Her stick legs extended all the way up there. "I see you've already started experimenting some."

She lowered herself back down to his level. "I still can't quite get over how amazing this entire situation is. I'm finding myself distracted more and more by every new detail." She shook her head to clear her thoughts. "Anyway, how have you organized these?"

TB set his notepad on the table and rotated it so that she could get a better look. "I was originally going to organize the results alphabetically, but I figured that it might actually be better to order them from simplest/the abilities we know the most about, to complex/the ones we know the least. I also separated the few that we have no basis of reference for yet."


MOST INFO
0. Balloony - can't be killed [do not test with]
1. Golf Ball - can lengthen legs at will
2. Tennis Ball - can create arms for himself
3. Bottle - super strength
4. Pin - invisibility
5. Naily - can teleport
6. Ruby - super speed
7. Pencil - can erase seemingly anything
8. Taco - can walk through walls
9. Teardrop - can "steal" other people's voi
and use them to talk
SOME INFO
10. Gelatin - can control metal (magnetism?)
11. Leafy - airbender
12. Marker - earthbender
13. Match - firebender
14. Book - can recover someone by writing
their name on her pages
15. Basketball - can change gravity levels
16. Needle - can enter mirrors



(A/N: Please let me know if any text there is too small to read! I'd be happy to reiterate in the comments.)

Golf Ball studied the notes carefully. "Good thinking. We can call down those with powers we know the most about early, then prepare for what we may encounter ahead of time as we move down the list. Why is Balloony labelled as zero?"

"He's already tested his invulnerability out once and discovered that he can still feel pain. So he would prefer not to try out any other methods."

"Ah. Unfortunate, but understandable. Well, we already both know I can lengthen my legs to quite a height, but I doubt I'll ever actually *need* to go that high, so testing out my limit is a lower priority."

"And since we already know what I can do, then that means we can move onto the first few objects!" TB cheered.

"Indeed! Who was first ag-" GB stopped as an idea struck her. "Actually..."

"What?"

"Have you tried producing... *more* than two arms?"

Tennis Ball thought about it and realized he hadn't. He'd experimented with retracting and recreating his two current arms, but never bothered to go further, since any other objects who naturally had arms always only had two. Now...

He concentrated. Suddenly, a third arm popped out of his left side, just above his other left limb. "Woah!" He gasped. Golf Ball took a step back in astonishment. Concentrating again, TB created another limb for himself, and another, and another. Soon, he had four limbs on each side of his fuzzy body.

(this book is so stupidly cursed why did I make this lmao)

"In... incredible!" Golf Ball gushed, nearly at a loss for words. "I must admit, I'm starting to feel jealous. Imagine how many tasks you can accomplish at once with not just two arms, but *eight!* You take the definition of 'multitasking' to an entirely new level."

Tennis Ball chucked nervously and scratched the back of his head (with which arm, he wasn't sure). "Well, you still didn't really draw a short straw. You've always complained about being too short, but now you can reach anything you want, arms or no arms!"

She *hmmfed* good-naturedly. "I suppose. Anyway, let's begin!"

"Yeah, the EXIT's pretty boring most of the time, but-"

"8-BAAAAAAAAALL!!

8-Ball turned around to see Puffball rushing through the air. She screeched to a halt when she reached him, out of breath. "Hii!!"

"Hey, Puffball." 8-Ball smiled. "Good to see you again."

"Same! I was so sad when you got eliminated." She took a deep breath. "Anyway, what's up? Also, hi TV."

From behind 8-Ball, TV displayed a gif of a hand waving. "Not much. TV and I were just chatting about various things. Oh! Do you know what his power is?"

"Nope. I forgot he even went to the party."

"Check this out," TV said enthusiastically. He brought up an image of a cowboy hat on his screen. Then the outline of one appeared above his head, and before Puffball could say anything, TV was wearing same cowboy hat. "If I display something on my screen, I can create it in real life!"

"Woah!!" Puffball gushed. "That is AWESOME! How big of an object can you create?"

"I don't know. I've only created small items so far. Why?"

The puffy cloud of pink glanced around almost furtively before answering. "Well, I've noticed that some of the other objects who were in the mansion have similar mind-over-matter powers. Gelatin can control metal, Marker can control dirt, Leafy can control air, etc."

"Huh," 8-Ball grunted. "So?"

"I kinda wanna... I don't know, organize a fight between them or something. Like an arena battle! It could be really cool! But I don't know how to build an arena."

TV caught on. "So you were wondering if I can create an arena for this event, using my ability?"

"Precisely!"

8-Ball nodded. "That certainly sounds quite interesting. I'm down to help manage that."

"May I cut in?" a new voice said. Liy approached the group of three, an expression of interest on her face. "That whole idea sounds *super* fun, and I'd love to join if you'll let me."

"Of course!" Puffball sang. "The more, the merrier!"

Liy rubbed her hands together with glee. "Excellent. Let's get planning, then."

doo do doo doooooooooo, don't mind me just not updating in 2 months lmfao

in all seriousness, I think I've got a bit of momentum going now so hopefully we won't see any more 2-month long waits

Timeless Shenanigans

"What can you do again?"

"This!" Basketball closed her eyes and concentrated for a second. "There, try jumping."

Confused, Saw jumped a little and bounced much higher than she expected. "Woah! I feel like I'm on the moon again!"

"Cool, can you do the same to me?" Gaty asked.

"Of course!" Basketball repeated her actions. "I can change the gravity levels of any object I want to. It's fun, right? Although, when I was still getting the hang of it earlier, I almost-"

"Excuse me?"

Baskie turned around to see Tree standing nearby with Remote by his side. "May I ask you a favor?"

"One sec, guys," she told Gaty and Saw. She then left them to bounce around at their own will and walked over to the two Death Pacters. "What's up?"

"Someone spilled Yoyleberry juice on Remote during the party last night, and she's been stuck speaking French ever since."

"EXÉCUTER LE ROI!!" Remote interrupted loudly. "Avec sa tête de Louis XVI!"

"Nobody here knows French. Golf Ball said she was too busy researching everyone's superpowers or whatever to help, but I've heard that you're also good with machines. Do you think you'll be able to fix her? Preferably without just killing and recovering her."

Basketball inspected Remote, and Remote inspected her right back.

"Not sure, but I can definitely take a closer look. Is her battery case on her back?"

"Won't taking out her batteries kill her?" Tree asked nervously.

"No, it would just deactivate her. Like us going to sleep. And it'll probably help, anyways-"

Remote tugged at Tree's hand and tried to get away. "Lâche-moi, vous non-conifère ravisseur!"

"-considering that she's acting oddly in addition to speaking oddly."

"Alright." Tree quickly opened Remote's battery case before she could respond and popped them out. Remote froze, then fell over comically, her limbs going limp.

Basketball tried to take a looksie inside, but the empty battery case was just that - an empty battery case. "I can't see much from here. I'll probably have to take her apart and look at the actual mechanisms, but I can promise that I won't kill her. Probably. I'll take her over to where I have some tools stashed and see what I can do there."

"That sounds wonderful. Thanks in advance."

"No prob!"

Clock and Blocky peeked out from behind a bush and spied on Nickel as he chatted with Taco a distance away. "You ready?" Blocky whispered. Clock nodded back. "Great. Let's see if this works, then."

Blocky put his hand on top of Clock's head. Clock concentrated, and time began to slow. In a matter of seconds, it had stopped completely. They looked around - everyone and everything was utterly frozen. "This is amazing!" Blocky gushed.

"Quickly," Clock reminded. "I can only do this for so long."

"Right, right." In sync, the two objects emerged from the bush and stepped towards Nickel, careful not to lose contact with each other. It

took less than a minute, but they could both feel the air around them growing colder and colder with every second that wasn't passing.

They positioned themselves behind the silver coin and Clock let go. Time instantly began to move again, and the cold feeling quickly dissipated. Nickel couldn't see them, but it was evident that Taco could, as her eyes widened in surprise. To her, it must have seemed as if they appeared from thin air. Before Nickel could turn around, Blocky quickly breathed in and shouted at the top of his lungs: *"BOO!!"*

Nickel flinched so hard he spun around on one foot and landed facedown in the dead grass. Both pranksters immediately erupted into rambunctious laughter. "Oh, man, that was PERFECT!" Blocky said, wiping away a tear. "I wish I could have seen his face!"

"I'm starting to see why you like pranking others so much," Clock giggled.

Nickel spat out a mouthful of dirt and got up from the ground. "Oh yeah? Well, how about... uh... what if you got a taste of your own medicine!"

"What do you mean?"

"What I mean is this."

Nickel met Blocky's eyes, and the wooden cube suddenly grew dizzy and doubled over, but only for a second. The feeling vanished as quickly as it had appeared, leaving him confused. "What the..." he muttered. "Is your power just making people dizzy? Psh, how lame."

Then he looked up and saw himself and Clock staring at him. "Um."

A smirk formed on the imposter's face. "Look down."

He did so and jumped back. The body of a silvery coin jumped with him. "Wh-! How are- did we switch bodies or something!?"

"That's exactly what we did! Now, what was your power again...? Oh yeah." Nickel transformed Blocky's right arm into the laser cannon. "Feeling scared yet?"

Clock gulped and stepped back. "I'm mostly confused, but yeah."

"Then get ready to run!" Nickel aimed at Blocky and Blocky ran. The three chased each other around the plains, confusing themselves in the process.

Taco just spectated from a distance and shook her head. "Chaos, chaos. Such is the way of life in Goiky."

Nickel/Blocky finally managed to grab Blocky/Nickel. *(This is even confusing for me.)* "Hah! Gotcha!" He lifted him by his head while Clock retreated to Taco's side.

Blocky cowered in Nickel's body. "What are you gonna do to me?"

Nickel considered it, then shrugged. "Nothing. Here, you can have your body back now."

Their faces changed slightly, then Blocky dropped Nickel. He morphed his arm back to a regular limb again and pointed at the currency. "You have guts. Mad respect for that."

"Thank you. But no more jumpscares."

"Hmm... if you guys want someone else to prank, I think I have an object in mind," Taco offered. She shiftily pointed towards Pillow, who was standing under a tree off in the distance. "Pillow over there is all alone and not paying attention to her surroundings. Looks like a prime target to me."

"Oooo, thanks! Clock, you still in?"

"I'm down for another."

Blocky set his hand on Clock's head once more. As they waited, Nickel shuffled over to Taco and whispered into her ear. "Why are you helping them? They just jumpscared me!"

"To be fair, I did the same thing to Teardrop earlier today. But just watch," she whispered back. Suddenly, the duo vanished and reappeared behind Pillow in the same instant. The moment they moved, a hidden rope tightened around their feet and yanked them

upwards into the tree, dangling them upside down. Pillow turned to them triumphantly.

Nickel was impressed. "Woah. How'd you know that would happen?"

"I learned earlier that Pillow's power is that she's able to tell the future. I figured that she would probably see their prank coming and prepare for it, and it looks like I was right." She put her hands around her mouth and shouted over to the pranksters. "That's payback for shooting me earlier, Blocky!"

finally putting those 3 years of French I took in school to good use ;)

Extensive Research

(A/N: This chapter is a collection of various notes/observations [but not all of them] from Golf Ball as she and Tennis Ball studied the contestant's abilities. Just wanted to clarify.)

March 25th, 2020. Page 1 of what I've learned about the other's abilities.

I'm fortunate to have such a good comrade at my side here. Two globules will likely make this much faster than if it was just I working on it. But enough about us.

#2, Tennis Ball: He seems to be able to create up to eight arms for himself. To be honest, any more than two is a little unsettling, but eight is just downright creepy. He resembles a spider. I wonder if that would trigger Flower's entomophobia? May want to test when Flower comes down here.

#7, Pencil: She can erase seemingly anything with that almost magical eraser of hers. I don't use the word "magical" lightly, but I have a feeling I'll be using it a lot here. I've given her many different substances to try and erase - concrete, steel, wood, titanium, plutonium - yet she can eradicate every single one with ease. The most bizarre thing is that she is even able to erase liquids and gasses from existence; I tested it using lava from my incinerator, and if she moves her head around fast enough, the whooshing of air to fill in the gaps that she creates can be heard. She's *literally* creating vacuums with her head. I just don't understand it.

#9, Teardrop: TD appears to be able to steal anyone else's voice and use it as her own. When she talks with my voice, I find myself unable to speak until she is done speaking, no matter how hard I try. The same goes for laughter, or anything that normally requires a voice box.

#14, Book: Fortunately for us, Book can recover any dead object she wishes to simply by writing her name on one of her pages. She'll be quite useful until Four returns. She's eaten a yoyleberry to increase her own durability, and she's graciously accepted to stay down in the factory while I find out more about the next abilities. I will likely need a source of recovery handy.

#15, Basketball: Basketball's gravity changing abilities works on both sentient objects and inanimate objects. She describes using it as imagining a slider in her head, with it being at "9.8" in the center by default - Earth's natural gravitational pull in meters per second. She can move the slider up to increase someone's or something's gravity by approximately three times, and she can move it down to decrease gravity levels. At zero, the target object is entirely weightless, and the slider can even go *below* zero; in this case, the target object will begin to fall *upwards,* away from the planet. She claims she nearly sent Grassy into orbit by accident this way.

#16, Needle: Although this is not the power I'm the most intrigued about, Needle's ability to move between mirrors like portals is still probably one of the most unique things I've ever seen. Tennis Ball and I built several mirrors and placed them at various spots around the factory, and she is able to enter and exit any of them at will. She's also able to bring others through as well, as long as she maintains contact with the person/people while entering. Inside the mirrors is an environment like nothing I've ever seen before, and in fact, I may need to start a new paragraph just to be able to properly describe it.

For the most part, the "mirror realm" is nothing but a blank void. The "sky" is completely white all around, with the "ground" being slightly off-white, presumably so it stands out. The front of any visible mirrors act like windows, allowing anyone looking to see through it and into the world on the other side, while the backs of mirrors

resemble nothing more than a hazy shimmer in the air. But the weirdest part is how our bodies act in this environment. We don't get hot, we don't get cold. We don't need to breath, and we don't feel anything - physically, that is. It's like our nerve sensors simply don't work. I was constantly unnerved (pun not intended) by the fact that I felt like I was always floating, since I couldn't feel the sensation of my feet on the ground. At least gravity seems to work as normal.

I definitely want to research this more later, but we're moving on to others for now. (Also, side note: similar to how it is impossible to enter this realm without Needle, it is also impossible to leave without her.)

#17, Lollipop: Lollipop's ability is that she can form a bubble of energy, very similar to the one that seems to have given everyone their powers in the first place. The maximum diameter of this sphere is about 10 feet, and it doesn't extend underground unless Lollipop wills it to. So far, it's withstood several powerful forms of destruction without even being damaged; although the more hits it takes, the more tired Lollipop becomes. I wish I could have tested dynamite on it, but that would have also blown up the laboratory. The sphere automatically collapses if she falls unconscious.

#19, Eraser: Previously, we thought Eraser could only understand Woody and that was it. Now we've learned that's only part of his abilities; his overall hearing has improved significantly. Normal and louder sounds stayed the same, but he can hear over much longer distances. He was able to hear me whisper a message while we were across the factory from each other, even with background noise.

The next few objects discovered their abilities one by one while I was testing the others above and came to me, so I'm putting these notes on a new page, since we knew nothing about these powers beforehand.

Flower: Flower's ability is just odd. She can rotate the petals around her head so quickly that they act like an electric sawblade, and are actually able to cut through a few materials. The petals don't get damaged, and Flower has expressed not feeling any pain when cutting through something else. Very strange.

Nickel: This one was... an experience. Apparently, Nickel can switch bodies with anyone he chooses, as long as he makes eye contact with them. When in the body of another object with powers, he can still use those powers until he moves back to his own. Now, let's say Nickel and I have switched bodies. If Nickel dies while in my body, then I stay in Nickel's body until he is recovered. Once that happens, my mind is ripped out of Nickel's previous body and I die. His newly recovered body stays alive and well while the body I was previously occupying vanishes. I can then be recovered in my own body. The same would happen if the situation were switched.

Donut: It could be said that Donut has two separate powers, but seeing how closely related they are, my opinion is that they are essentially one. One part is that he is able to "listen" to any other object's thoughts if he wishes to. Those thought then transmit themselves as a voice in his head. For now, I'll just call this mind reading. As for the other part, he appears to also have minor telekinesis as well. Meaning, he can lift and move around objects with his mind. Nothing too heavy, though; I would guess that his telekinetic strength is probably about the same as his physical arm strength, which is average.

Fries: On his own, Fries is useless. However, he can magnify the abilities of other objects tenfold. (Or so I would assume - it was very difficult to accurately determine just how much the amount was.) He didn't seem to have any effect on Book or I, but Tennis Ball was able to produce so many arms for himself that we both lost count. We also decided to bring multiple other objects back down here to see what they could do, and Fries' amplification worked on most of them. Oddly enough, Fries himself didn't seem to get tired or fatigued from constant usage of his ability at all.

(Another side note: Fries can only increase somebody's powers if he is directly touching them.)

Golf Ball set her notepad on the table and sat down on the ground, her legs sore from writing so much. "I feel exhilarated after experimenting with Fries' magnification abilities. I propose we take a short break before continuing."

"Fine by me." Tennis Ball went over to the nearest sink to get some water. "I need to calm my mind a little as well. Having so many arms was freaking me out."

"With all the black limbs surrounding you, you were beginning to resemble Black Hole."

"Heh. Yeah."

TB strolled back over with two glasses of water and handed one to GB. "Thanks," she said warmly. TB sat down across from her and they both lost themselves in their own thoughts for a while, occasionally sipping at their drinks.

"Something's bothering me about Lightning," GB suddenly blurted. "In between all these experiments, I've been idly thinking about yesterday. I want to know more about the origin of that energy sphere that seemingly gave us our powers, and I believe Lightning is connected somehow."

Her friend set down his glass. "How so?"

"I don't have any solid evidence. But I've been asking around, and nobody remembers seeing Lightning at all yesterday before the party, and then he just mysteriously shows up at the mansion *after* the energy sphere surrounded it and caused it to collapse. I wish we could talk to him directly, but..."

Both scientists turned to see Lightning resting on a rubber mat covering a smaller table. "You said you attempted to get him to wake?"

"Yeah," Tennis Ball replied. He started to count on his fingers. "I've tried smelling salts, loud noises, splashing water on his face, and a couple other methods. I even used a defibrillator on him, which was probably redundant, but hey, you never know. Any luck on learning more about what could have caused the energy orb?"

GB frowned. "None whatsoever. Like I said last night before you told me to go to bed, after looking through the majority of our history and science books, I didn't find anything useful. I've also tried searching for some sort of pattern in the other's abilities that we have so far, but it's all seemingly random."

"It *is* possible that Lightning was just drugged quite powerfully." TB tapped his chin in thought. "But I haven't found traces of anything foreign on him. And even if he *was* drugged, that would also raise the question: who drugged him?"

They both glanced at the bolt of electricity again, silent for a moment. "I am relatively confident that he caused all this," Golf Ball finally spoke up. "Whether willingly or forced to. But there's just too many important pieces of the puzzle missing. All we can do, I think, is wait and hope that Lightning wakes up on his own soon, or that some other factor enters and simplifies this equation."

Tennis Ball nodded agreement. Another moment of silence passed before Golf Ball finished her water and stood up. "Alright, I think I'm ready to continue."

"Same here." Tennis Ball copied her actions and set his glass down on the ground. "Either TV or Pillow is next, right? I'm looking forward to seeing what items TV can create."

"And *I'm* EXTREMELY curious about Pillow's future telling abilities."

They looked at each other and had the same thought, speaking in unison. "Let's call them *both* down next!"

yeah, this is really similar to the "log" chapters, but I wanted to elaborate some more on powers that wouldn't be *fully* elaborated in the log chapters (ALL abilities will be covered at least somewhat, though)

also, if anyone was wondering, Needle's power is very much inspired by the mirror mints from the Candy Shop War book series; I'd recommend giving it a read, it's pretty fun :)

({ [LOG: 003] })

[beep]

Is this thing on? It had better be. I'd hate to think that I wasted so much time building a simple recording device, only for it not to function. Also, my hand is getting cramped from writing all the previous logs down. (Ow.)

Today is January 30th, 2020. As of this log, there are now nine more subjects with new powers. I keep breaking my previous records. I never thought I would say this, but I believe I'm starting to actually have fun doing this! I also believe I've managed to zero in on the final number of candidates for this project, but I will have to make a little more progress to set that number in stone.

Listed below are the 9 new subjects and results of the abilities my experimentation brought to them.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 050]

While some of the abilities that I'm giving these objects are quite complex, such as the mirror portal one, quite a few are also very simple. Short and sweet.

Today, I will be focusing on those simple ones, such as Subject 050's. Although her body is still quite fragile, she can now lift up to approximately fifteen times more than the average object can. Powerful, yet her body is liable to break at no more than a hammer's tap... a "glass cannon," if you will.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 045]

While visiting Subject 045, I've noticed that she has a tendency to shout the number "eight" whenever saying a word that rhymes with eight, for reasons unknown. I have not yet found a way to cure her of this yet, so instead I decided to give her the ability to shout much louder than normal whenever she pleases.

Note: soundproof 045's room ASAP, and wear noise-cancelling headphones whenever approaching. She's already purposely broken the microphone on the camera inside, with the mindset that if she's annoying enough, I'll let her go. That is not the case in the slightest.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 011]

This "power" is certainly an interesting one, albeit still somewhat simple. The idea was one of those ideas that tend to occur in the middle of the night, when your brain is half shut off. I decided to implement it anyway, though. It amuses me. The ability: Subject 011 can now rotate the petals around her head like a sawblade. In fact, they're sharp enough at the speed to essentially BE a sawblade. She's cut through several materials so far. Quite impressive.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 039]

039 can now "spawn" multiple copies of herself and order them around like mindless minions. She actually claims that they're mindless, saying that "unless I tell them to do something, they won't do anything." She can also choose to see and hear out of any existing clone she wishes to, which is quite incredible, and can delete any from existence.

Note 2: the maximum number of clones she can create is unknown right now.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 007]

Subject 007's ability is one of the more passive ones. I've greatly increased his range of hearing; he can hear normal and quieter sounds over much

larger distances than most objects can, and as a side effect, he appears to be able to understand Subject 002. I'm not quite sure how that works...

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 046]

This one was quite tricky to accomplish. It was not enjoyable to have to tweak this ability so that it doesn't work with the material the cell walls and floor are made out of, but I've managed to do it.

Subject 046 now has the power to move through solids as if they were gases. To break down how this works a little more (haha), she can will her particles to separate from one another when she touches a solid, so much that the individual atoms can pass through it. They then automatically reassemble on the other side the moment they detect they've passed through said solid. To her, though, it looks like magic.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 038]

If Subject 038 makes eye contact with somebody else, he can choose to switch bodies with them. Actually, it's more like switching minds, to be honest. If in the body of another object with an ability of some sort, 038 can also freely use that object's ability. 038 can choose to switch back whenever, but he can be forced back into his body if either he or the object he's currently switched with is killed then recovered.

Note 3: make sure 038 is wearing a blindfold when not being experimented on. He attempted to escape earlier by switching bodies with my assistant.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 048]

Some of these experiments are becoming riskier and riskier. For example, Subject 048's new ability to create multiple objects/items in real life by displaying them on his screen proved to be troublesome when he tried to inject me with a syringe of freeze juice. Fortunately, he seems to have a limit on the size of things he can create. I'll have to start keeping an eye on

him, though.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 035]

For Subject 035, I was originally hoping to make him an amplifier for other subjects' powers. It proved tricky to choose other subjects with abilities that wouldn't be able to overpower me and my assistant if amplified, but I have succeeded. 035's amplification has worked on everyone I've tested so far, but it's unfortunately impossible to test with everyone. As an added caution, I implemented his power such that he can only empower others when making direct contact with them.

~~~~~

All in all, everything is going quite well. There have been some blips here and there, but what's progress without setbacks? My main worry right now is that my assistant's loyalty appears to be dwindling rapidly, but I know he won't do anything as long as I have his friends under my control.

I'm getting closer to the end of stage one, but I hope to finish everything within the next month or two; I don't want the viewers getting suspicious about an extra-long "episode" production length.

This is the end of this recording. Signing out until the next log. Now, how do I turn this thing o-

[beep]

hmmmm I wonder who this mysterious assistant is

More = Merrier

"Does... *this* look good?" Puffball dropped the marker she was holding in her mouth and proudly showed off her drawing to the others.

Pen and Liy inspected it, and Pen just chuckled and shook his head. "Puffball, maybe you should just leave the drawing to the pros."

"What pros? From what I remember, *you're* the one who made your team lose in an artistic-based contest."

"Hey!"

Liy huffed indignantly. "Yeah, and that's the contest that caused me to get eliminated next episode." She swiped the paper from underneath Puffy's floating body. *"I'll* make the posters for this."

From nearby, 8-Ball spat a pencil out of his mouth. "Come on, guys. There's no need to fight. All of us have already made significant progress on the main schematic together. What's the final number of contestants again?"

"Donut has telekinesis, Barf Bag controls water, Gelatin has magnetism, Marker controls dirt and stone, Leafy controls air currents, Match controls fire, and Woody controls plants and greenery," TV said promptly. "So, seven."

8-Ball glanced down at the blueprints under him. "A shame it's not one more."

"If I can't draw, then I'm going to go find someone else to help us," Pen said. "...do we need any help?"

"We could probably use someone to help us advertise once the poster is done. The more, the merrier. Perhaps Ruby? Her power is superspeed, right? She could quickly go spread the word."

Pen nodded. "I'll go look for her."

He quickly sprinted away from the others and took a good look around the massive field of dead grass they all lived in. Unfortunately, Ruby was nowhere to be seen. In fact, the others had stationed themselves in a spot that was a ways away from everyone else so they wouldn't be disturbed when planning, but that resulted in Pen having to run quite a distance to even get to anyone.

By the time he reached the nearest object - Pie - he was already panting and had to pause for a breather. "What's up, Pen?" Pie greeted politely.

He held up a finger, then took a second to rest until his breathing returned to normal. "Have you... seen... Ruby anywhere?" he asked between gasps.

She scratched her chin. "I don't believe so. Why?"

"Me and a... couple others are trying to... find someone to... advertise something." Pen straightened, his breath mostly returned. "Since she has superspeed, we hoped she could get posters out about an event to everyone."

Pie smiled calmly. "I think I may be able to help you out with that."

"Really?"

She nodded. After a moment of silence and Pen glancing around awkwardly, Pie's left side suddenly started to blur. It then began to stretch, growing away from the rest of her until suddenly, she was split into two. Two identical Pies sat next to each other. "What the heck!" Pen exclaimed. "Did you just undergo mitosis or something??"

"No, silly. It's just my ability."

"Oh." A thought occurred to him. "Say... are you able to create more of those clones?"

Pie smiled again. "Why do you think I said I could help you guys spread the word?"

"I'm back!" Pen called over to the others.

Liy looked over at him. "Finally! You really took your time. Also, where's Ruby?"

"I couldn't find her. But I found someone much better suited to help us!"

Pie walked out from behind him. "Hey."

Glancing between the two Death PACTers, 8-Ball's face scrunched up in confusion. "How will Pie be able to assist?"

Pie closed her eyes, and everyone else's widened as Pie split herself into two, three, four, *five.* All the clones simultaneously waved at them. "If you need a bunch of objects to spread word of this event of yours, then I'm your gal."

"Wow." Puffball's jaw dropped open. "That's so cool! I'm starting to wish *I* had a superpower. How many clones can you create?"

The baked goods shrugged in unison.

8-Ball shook off his amazement. "Ok. Um. Well, our arena's going to be big, so we need you to spread the word to as many objects as you can find. Including recommended characters."

"Sounds like a plan. What do I need to say?"

"You don't need to say anything. I've drawn up a poster ad that you can give to anyone you see." 8-Ball glanced at TV, who generated a photocopier. "Once we've got enough copies, that is."

" 'k." One of the Pies sat down as the other four suddenly vanished from existence.

Liy put her hand to her chin. "What's the next step? Should TV just generate the arena now?"

Shaking his head, TV pointed to Pen with his foot. "Not yet. The blueprints are done, so I'm able to do it, but we want to make sure we have all the right equipment first. Pen, can you think of a location we should go to get these?"

"Yeah! I know just the place!"

As Pen uncapped himself and began to draw on a piece of paper, Puffball floated over to TV's. "Why can't you just, I don't know, generate all the equipment we need *and* the arena?"

"The arena is a massive structure with many complexities. It will likely be difficult to generate as it is, and my abilities may have a limit. We need to be prepared just in case."

"Aight."

TV took 8-Ball's poster and placed it facedown on the photocopier. Pen placed the cap back on his head and stepped back. "There. It should open in a second?"

"What should open?" Liy queried, curious.

"Take a look!"

Liy stepped forward to see a crude doodle of what looked like the front of a building. As she watched, the drawing wobbled and stretched, then dissolved completely. In its place was... Liy wasn't sure what she was looking at. "What am I looking at?"

"It's my power!" Pen said triumphantly. "For any location that I draw on paper, some weird, inter-dimensional doorway that leads there open. This one goes to Yellow Face's warehouse, which has over a million products but is thousands of miles away normally. It's really nifty!"

Liy smiled slyly. "Oh, so *that's* why you're here. I was *wondering* why the others recruited you to help organize this event."

"Hey!!"

"Last one through is a rotten Eggy!" Puffball shouted. She shot through the portal at warp speed, causing a gust of wind to blow on everyone's faces. Pen jumped in right after her.

8-Ball looked away from the photocopier from a second. "TV and I will stay behind to make sure these posters print properly. Liy, can you go with them to make sure they don't burn the place down? I don't want to be on Yellow Face's bad side."

"Sure." Liy gave them a thumbs-up before looking down at the doorway. She smiled. "I've found my next adventure!"

Mechanical Mishaps

Basketball carefully slid a powerless Remote off of her head and onto a wooden table. On the ground nearby was a toolbox filled with various hardware tools, the same ones she had used to fix up Robot Flower after the lavapocalypse. "Ok, Remote," she muttered, setting the batteries on the ground. "Let's see if I can't fix you up."

She bent down and began to rummage around in her toolbox, looking for a screwdriver. While she did that, Grassy ambled over to her. He opened his mouth to greet his friend, but got distracted by the lifeless Remote lying on the table.

He gingerly tapped the mechanical mind's arm before noticing the two batteries on the ground. An idea sparked in his head and he picked up the power cells. He then climbed on the table, and after a second of figuring out which way was which, inserted them into Remote's casing.

Remote jumped off the table, startling Basketball. She whirled around, amazed that the robot was back on her feet. "What?"

"Grassy has helped!" Grassy explained cheerfully. Basketball started again, not having noticed him at first.

Remote took one look at Basketball and growled. "Tu n'auras plus le dessus sur moi, femme!" Without warning, she bolted.

BB turned to Grassy. "Grassy! Did you put her batteries back in?"

"Yeah! She looked dead, so Grassy recovered her!"

Looking at the young one's smile, she couldn't stay mad for long. She just sighed instead. "Right. Well, now I've got to catch her *and* fix her."

8-Ball crossed a line through the last item on the list before double-checking it. "Well, guys, I think that's everything for the equipment we need. Do the blueprints look good?"

"I thought you said the blueprints were finished," Puffball complained.

"You can never be too sure. Pie and her... clones have already gone off with the posters I made, and Pen and Liy are retrieving the competing contestants... so I think we're set."

PB did a twirl in the air. "Wooo! TV, now's your time to shine. You ready, bud?"

The screen nodded. "I believe so. The blueprints are in my memory, so... here we go." He paused. "You may want to stand back."

Puffball and 8-Ball flew and rolled back. TV turned away from them, making sure there was sufficient space on the dead grass in front of him, and began to concentrate. The blueprints appeared on his screen, and mentally, he constructed in his mind how it should look in real life.

Slowly, but surely, a massive structure began to take shape in front of him.

Catching Remote was easier said than done.

Remote was faster than she looked, and much more paranoid than usual. Any time Basketball and Grassy got within a hundred feet, she would sprint away again, leading to an endless game of back-and-forth. Even other objects who were good at running that Basketball asked for help, like Needle and Firey, couldn't quite match her speed.

Basketball finally flumped to the ground, panting heavily. Grassy climbed on top of her head. "Alright," she said between breaths. "This clearly isn't working. I don't know how we're supposed to catch her. Any ideas, Grassy?"

"Hmm..." Grassy put his hand to his chin thoughtfully. "Set a... trap?" he asked uncertainly. "But a friendly one! So she doesn't get hurt!"

"No, she doesn't trust anything right now. She wouldn't fall for any bait we set..." She suddenly sat back up, causing Grassy to slide off. "...but maybe we can ask for assistance from *someone* she trusts." Quickly, she ran the names of Remote's teammates through her mind. "Pen, Liy, and Pie are busy with something right now, I think. She wouldn't trust Tree after earlier, Bottle's too ditzy, and who knows what goes on inside Pillow's head. So that leaves-"

"Black Hole!" Grassy finished for her.

"I guess he's the only other Death Pacter left."

"No, Black Hole!" Grassy tapped her side to get her attention and pointed across the plains.

The one and only sentient cosmic entity himself was floating towards them, Remote somehow trapped in his accretion disk. "...oh."

"Quelle sorcellerie est-ce ??" Remote complained, struggling but failing to escape the gravity.

Black Hole stopped next to them. "Tree mentioned to me that Remote was acting weird. When she came near me, I snatched her up cause she looked like she wasn't back to normal yet. Weren't you the one working on her?"

"I was, and I was just about to come to you for help," Basketball explained. "This will save a lot of time. Thank you!"

"Anytime."

Setting the toothbrush down, Basketball very carefully reconnected the last circuitboard to the rest of Remote's body. "That should be the last of the juice damage expunged, hopefully. If not, the only other solution I see is to..." She glanced guiltily at Black Hole, who hovered behind her. "...kill and recover her."

"Still not a fan of that option, but at least you've tried your best here."

Basketball gently clicked the batteries back in place, then replaced the cover as well and stood back. "Remote?" she said uncertainly.

The mechanical mind twitched, then slid off the table. She sat back up slowly, looking around with a confused expression on her face. "...what happened?"

Black Hole and Basketball simultaneously exhaled a sigh of relief. Grassy, however, immediately said, "You threw Rocky out of a window last night!"

"I *what!?"*

Golf Ball paced around the factory floor impatiently. "Come on, Pillow. Where are you?"

"Be more patient, GB," Tennis Ball scolded. "It's only been five minutes since you sent that signal to TV, asking him to retrieve Pillow."

"I know, but... I'm just so curious about how the flow of time really works. I need-" She stopped as they both heard the sound of footsteps descending the factory's staircase. "Aha! That must be them!"

Excited, she extended her legs up to the top of the stairwell, just in time to see TV walking downwards. "Hello, TV!" she greeted enthusiastically. But a moment's inspection revealed that a certain feather-filled friend was missing. "...where's Pillow?"

"She told me to give you this note." He handed a slip of paper to the

scientist, who took it in her mouth (since her feet were several dozen feet below) and descended back to the factory floor, where she spat out the note. She began to read out loud eagerly.

"Dear Golf Ball. You want to know more about my ability to tell the future. Obviously, I can look ahead and know what you're going to ask ahead of time, so I've answered all you need to know in this note here. First of all, I can't see further than a few hours into the future, but nearly everything in between is as clear as day to me, if I wished to see it. When I looked forwards to our conversation before I wrote this note, I saw me telling you most of this information face-to-face. However, when I made the decision to save time and write this note instead of talking directly, the scene changed to you and Tennis Ball reading this note instead. That is all. - Pillow"

Both globules were silent for several moments, allowing TV to reach the floor before one of them spoke again. "Whew. That's a lot of information to take in," TB commented.

"T... Tennis Ball... do you know what this means?" GB got a joyful gleam in her eye. "Pillow has proved that time isn't rigid. The future actually depends on what choices we make, rather than our choices being pre-determined and unmovable. Our actions actually matter! Haha!"

As Golf Ball danced around with glee, Tennis Ball leaned in close to TV. "Golf Ball's always been worried about whether our choices in life actually mean something, or if everything is pre-determined," he explained quietly. "But she's never actually been able to prove or disprove either option until now. Next time you see Pillow, tell her thank you."

"She knew you would say that and told me to say 'you're welcome.'"

Tennis Ball laughed. "Right. Anyways, besides Pillow, you're the last object on our list who's powers we know about. But we know very little. Can you generate an item for us as a demonstration?"

"Wait, there's more on here," GB said, celebration already mostly over. She flipped the paper around. "P.S; TV can't generate anything right now, as his ability still needs to recharge after generating a

massive arena a few minutes ago."

Both orbs turned to TV. "...what arena?"

The Mind Games, part 1

Golf Ball, Tennis Ball, and TV emerged from the underground factory to see an enormous building in front of them, bigger than any of them had ever seen. A large line of objects, contestants of BFB and recommended characters alike, was outside a doorway which was slowly letting them inside. "...when did THIS get here?" Golf Ball asked out loud, bewildered. "And why are there so many recommended characters?"

"Looks like Pie executed her job well," TV mused. "Let's head inside. I think the games are about to start!" He led them over to a side door labeled *VIP only* and unlocked it.

They walked through a mess of support beams and up several stairs before emerging into an incredible scene. Countless objects, taking up just as many seats which all surrounded a circular arena floor at ground level. The arena seemed to be split into five sections - one with lots of water and ice, another with rocks and stone, a third with lusciously green grass and vines twisting around golden trees, a fourth with metal scrap dotted around the ground, and the final section filled with what looked like floating boxes made of plastic. All sections were the same size, except for the last one, which looked to be about three times larger.

A booming voice suddenly rose from speakers places all over the area. "WELCOME," it shouted, "to the MIIIIIIIIND GAAAAAAAMES!"

Two raised platforms with small booths in the stadium seats housed three objects total - Puffball and 8-Ball together in one, sharing a microphone, and Saw in the other, without a mic. "I'm Puffball!" Puffball continued enthusiastically into her mic. "And these are my co-commentators, 8-Ball and Saw. Together, we'll be commentating during this wonderful event!"

"I can't wait to get this started," 8-Ball said, sounding as monotone as

ever but with a smile on his face. "Puffball and I put a lot of work into this event, as well as several others. To all the familiar and unfamiliar faces in the crowd, I hope you all enjoy. Saw, would you care to recap what's actually going to happen here?"

"Of course!" Saw yelled. Despite not having a microphone, her voice was just as loud as the others, due to her power. "Recently, some of the objects who compete in BFB have received cool new powers. EEIGHT-Ball and Puffy-"

"Don't call me Puffy!"

"-along with a few others, identified seven contestants with 'mind-over-matter' powers. Those seven have agreed to duel it out in this awesome arena here for fame and glory! I'm a little jealous, actually."

"The competitors should be here in a few minutes," 8-Ball finished. "We're just waiting for the last of the invitees to enter their seats."

Down in the seats, Stapy hopped over to Pillow and claimed the empty seat next to her. "Finally! A familiar face. I was getting lost in the sea of recommended characters. Some of these guys are really weird, too!"

"We're all weird in our own ways."

Stapy heard a crunch and glanced over at her. She was holding a small bag. "What are you eating?"

"Peanuts. I got them from some object selling snacks. I'd offer you some, but I already know you'd decline."

"Your seer abilities are-"

"Creepy, I know."

"Actually, wait. Why are you here? Don't you already know what the outcome is?"

Pillow swallowed and popped another peanut into her mouth. "Possibly. But there's lots of chaos in the future, due to the fight; that makes my vision a little fuzzy. Anything can happen, after all." She

raised another peanut to her eye, then tossed it away. "Eh. That one's rotten."

"How do you-"

"I saw myself spitting it out a few seconds ahead."

Stapy gave her a weird look.

"Iiiiiiiisss everyone ready??" Puffball's loud voice suddenly echoed around the arena. The crowd cheered. "Then it's time to introduce our competitors!"

One of three doors in the wall next to the floating plastic box section opened up. "First up is a member of the largest alliance in BFDI, a follower of an infamous writing utensil, and - if you get on her wrong side - she can be a bit... fiery. It's MATCH!!"

Match stepped out of the doorway and waved at the crowd cheering for her. "WOOOO!! YOU GO, GIRL!!" Pencil shouted particularly loudly from the stands.

The woodsicle leaned backwards and pointed her hands into the sky, sending forth a ferocious blast of fire from her fingers. The crowd gasped, then broke into applause. Match bowed dramatically.

"Next up," 8-Ball said as the door in the overgrown section opened. "Another original BFDI contestant, he's been known to be quite the scaredy cat for most of his competing career. But recently he's become braver and braver, even managing to score a win against the team with the longest winning streak in BFDI history... it's Woody!"

The balsa stepped outside. It was obvious that he was nervous about the event, but he did his best to head forwards into the arena. He was back to normal size - his nature growth powers applied to wood as well.

Saw cleared her throat. "Thirdly, we have a newbie, only having competed in BFB so far. She's kind, supportive, and - contrary to popular belief - smart. Her literal insides may be yucky, but her figurative inside is quite nice. It's the one and only Barf Bag!"

Barf Bag crossed her arms as she entered the arena, walking onto the wooden dock that spanned the watery section. "I don't see why she had to accentuate that I'm filled with vomit," she muttered unhappily. But she pushed that aside for the moment and raised her arms, summoning water from below her to form into a floating ball. The crowd was impressed.

"My turn again!" Puffball took the stage. "This next competitor is quite the controversial one. She's the whole reason we're here, in fact - BFDI would have only had one season if she hadn't stolen Dream Island in the season one finale! You all know her, you all love her... or do you? Introducing, LEAFY!"

Another door in the wall of the floating box section opened up. Nobody came out for several seconds. "Erm..." Saw said. "Where is she?"

"Right here!" a voice shouted. Everyone looked up to see a green lemon leaf gliding through the air elegantly. She twirled and spun before landing on the ground with a flourish, buffeting the surroundings with a large gust of air. A large section of the crowd clapped happily.

8-Ball again. "Impressive entrance. I wonder if whoever's next can top that. Speaking of... this guy is quite the fun-lover, always teasing his friends and threatening to blow his teammates to smithereens. He has an addiction to metal forks as well, which is quite convenient for him, seeing as he can manipulate magnetic fields to his advantage. Please welcome Gelatin to the arena!"

A green glob of jelly sauntered out of his doorway in the metal scrap section, looking as confident as ever. He raised his hands, and several lumps of scrap raised with them. He spun them around in loop-de-loops before finally setting them down again.

"Only two left, folks!" Saw. "Like Gelatin, our next contestant is also from Team Ice Cube! Unlike Gelatin, however, he's much more level-headed, and much less fun-loving. He was once the host for a few episodes before retiring, due to having the Factor of Four within him. Back then, he had control over the game. Now, he has control over everything... with telekinesis! It's, of course, Donut!"

Almost reluctantly, Donut exited his spot under the stands and onto the floating box section, where Match and Leafy also resided. While the crowd cheered as usual, he glanced over to Gelatin, who shot a finger gun at him. "Sup, Jelly D. Ready to lose to me?"

The pastry simply rolled his eyes in response as Puffball began to introduce the last competitor. "And finally, we have a member of my own team coming up... finally. Yes, I said that twice. This one's known for his love of eating dirt. Now he gets to control dirt! And rock. And earth in general. Marker, come on out!"

A small explosion of dirt... well, exploded from the earthy section as Marker emerged from the ground like a mole. He then moved the rock with his mind and quickly fashioned a crude statue of himself out of it, getting many spouts of laughter and applause from the crowd.

"Hey, I didn't know Marker was competing in this!" Stapy said excitedly. "Go, Marker!"

"You could have asked me," Pillow commented.

"Shush."

8-Ball cleared his throat into the microphone. "As you can see, the arena is split into five separate sections - one being bigger for Donut and Leafy to throw around plastic boxes with, and the others themed to fit the other competitors' powers. We've tried to make this fight as balanced as possible. Now for the rules: there are none! As long as the audience doesn't get harmed, anything goes in this fight. Last object standing, be that 'still conscious' or 'still alive,' wins."

"Gosh, I'm getting so giddy!" Saw voiced. "I can already tell that this battle is going to be grEIGHT!"

"I feel ya, Saw." Puffball shook herself around. "Now, ARE WE READY??"

The crowd roared affirmation.

Down in the arena, Leafy smiled a big smile. "Good luck, everybody! May the best object win!"

"Right back atcha, Leafster," Gelatin agreed. Woody smiled as well, a small one.

Puffball grinned evilly. "Three... two... one..."

She paused, and all the competitors tensed. *"...BEGIN!!"*

({ [LOG: 004] })

[beep]

-ay's date is February 19th, 2020. As I near the end of this project, I have grown bolder, and I have been giving the most recent subjects riskier and risker powers (such as subjects 018, 037, and 006). As a safety measure, I have also designed a magical bracelet which I can use to dampen or completely block powers at will. Every subject with abilities is currently wearing one of these on an arm (or leg).

Tomorrow, I will start work on the final details needed before I can set them free. I will be recording my work on that in the next and final log.

Listed below are the last 9 new subjects and results of the abilities my experimentation brought to them.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 018]

This ability was nearly impossible to test at first. If I even told him about it to see if it worked or not, Subject 018 would simply draw some location outside of my laboratory and escape. Yes, he would be considerably easy to catch, but I cannot risk too much.

Fortunately, I eventually thought of a solution: I would tweak his memories until the only two locations he knew were two separate rooms inside the lab. It worked like a charm. I returned his memories to him after getting a dampener secured to his wrist.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 040]

I knew giving Subject 040 the ability to see into the future would be

interesting, but I didn't expect her to adapt to it quite so quickly. She began to finish my sentences, and answer my questions before I had even asked them. It's a little disconcerting, actually.

But she did give some very valuable info. She said every time she changed a decision to do something, or made one if she had difficulty choosing, the future would change as well, revealing that what we do does actually matter in the end, rather than everything having a predetermined outcome. It's only made me more determined than ever to complete this project.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 025]

Subject 025 can now manipulate... hm. I was originally going to say "the gravitational fields of other objects," but I realized that was inaccurate, as that would imply she could affect the earth's gravitational field, which is untrue. I suppose a more correct description is that she can manipulate how the earth's gravitational field can affect other objects (both sentient and inanimate). By "manipulate," I mean she can increase or decrease the target object's gravity, and even set it to zero, making them entirely weightless. I've lifted other objects before, but I had never experienced what it was like to float around myself before this. It was quite enjoyable.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 037]

If not for the dampening bracelets I had created earlier, trying to catch Subject 037 after giving her her power would have been nearly impossible, as she tried to escape several times by teleporting out of the lab. I have never been so grateful to be in possession of something than can be remote-controlled in my life.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 002]

After his experimentation, Subject 002 has an ability very similar to the "benders" from the second wave of subjects, most notably Subject 036, or the "earthbender." Rather than the earth itself, however, he can control nature, such as plants, wood, and... er, I suppose that's it. But "plants" is a

very broad term, so 002 has many options. Alongside the control of nature, he can additionally accelerate the growth of any flora he controls.

Note: this includes sentient plant life as well, such as himself (as he is made out of wood), 011, 019, 034, and 047. I neglected to see if the other "benders" could control objects that matched their elements previously, and it turns out they can. (Subject 005 can control 001 and 054; Subject 019 can control 030; Subject 024 can control 003, 008, and 012; Subject 036 can control 015; and Subject 056 can sort of control any metal parts an object may have.)

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 006]

Much like Subject 046, I had to tweak 006's ability so that she could not erase the material that her cell walls and floor are made of, but it was easier the second time around. Using her eraser, 006 can now erase through almost any material, whether it's solid, liquid, or gas. If she moves her head fast enough, I can hear air rushing in to fill the space she left behind.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 058]

With all the other complicated abilities, I decided that a relatively simple one is what Subject 058 needed. If she concentrates hard enough, she can create a spherical shield of purple energy, which ranges between 5-10 feet in diameter. It appears to be indestructible, but every time it is hit, 058 becomes more and more tired. If she falls unconscious, the bubble collapses on its own.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 003]

For reason unknown, Subject 003 appears to be mute; a unique trait which none of the other 63 objects I have in captivity possess. Even objects with unconventional methods of communication, or those who have difficulty talking - 015, 021, 031, 043, and 048 - can still talk. *Despite all my research on these objects, I've never been able to figure out what*

determines which traits each object has, such as limb count, or gender, or other quirks.

But that answer can wait for another day. Using the power of magic and science, I have given 003 a voice of her own. Well... almost. Technically, she doesn't have her own voice, but she can use other's at will. It's odd to hear your own voice coming from someone else's mouth, and EXTREMELY odd when said other person is using your voice to shout various swears at you.

Note: for a previously-mute individual, Subject 003 has quite *the vocabulary of violent curse words stored in her brain.*

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 029]

The final subject. Although I've already broken the boundaries of science and beyond several times, I wanted this last one to be a true testament of my own abilities. And what better way to do that than prove you can manipulate time?

As a result, Subject 029 can now "freeze" time. I would have used the word "stop," but 029 tells me that the air around him when time is frozen literally grows cold, so I think it's more appropriate. However, time is an unfathomably powerful force and always wants to move forward. Approximately two "minutes" of frozen time is all 029 can withstand before he collapses with exhaustion, and time continues as normal.

~~~~~

64 objects. From those objects, 32 subjects experimented on. From those subjects, 32 (mostly) unique abilities. With this, the core of my project is complete. And ahead of schedule, too. The next episode's date is supposed to be March 24th, 2020, which means I have 32 days to finish up and get these contestants back to their show. Plenty of time.

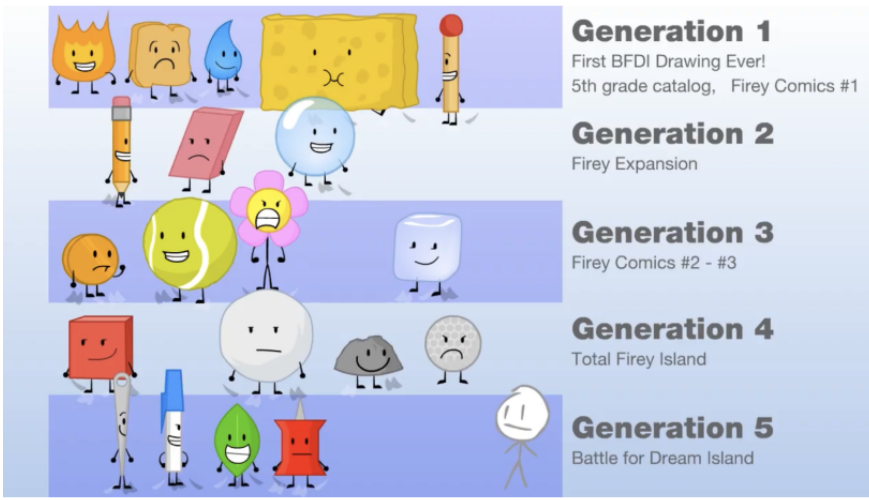
This is the end of this recording. Signing out until the next, and final, log.

[beep]

Phew. Now that everyone's powers have been revealed, I can clarify some things down here that I've been wanting to do for a while.

First off, only contestants who were in the mansion, way back in the second chapter of this book, when Lightning zapped it got powers of some sort (minus Lightning himself), which is half the cast. (I think I bit off a little more than I could chew there, haha.) Here's a handy-dandy visual to show who has powers and who doesn't.

Secondly, the method I used for numbering the contestants in these log chapters. Some of you may know about the "BFDI generations" image below. I used that as a basis to create three additional generations after it (the contestants in Gens 6-8 are ordered alphabetically.)


Generation 1
First BFDI Drawing Ever!
5th grade catalog, Firey Comics #1
Generation 2
Firey Expansion
Generation 3
Firey Comics #2 - #3
Generation 4
Total Firey Island
Generation 5
Battle for Dream Island

If you want, you can use that to go back through the log chapters and see who exactly I'm talking about every time a number is mentioned!

The Mind Games, part 2

The moment the word *begin* left Puffball's mouth, the seven competitors of the Mind Games jumped into action.

Match was the first to strike, turning to her left and blasting fire towards Leafy at a speed which would have impressed even Four, had he been there to witness it. Fortunately for Leafy, she barely managed to soar away in time, using the air under her to propel her straight upwards. Match's flames continued past her and nearly hit Donut, who had to dive out of the way.

Gelatin lifted a large chunk of metal into the air and began to sprint across the arena, pulling the metal behind him. Barf Bag raised her hands, simultaneously raising a wave of water to envelop Gelatin, but he wove his metal in front of him like a shield and brute forced his way through.

While Marker encased himself in a stone suit and went for Match, the first thing Woody did was retreat behind a tree and expand its width so that it actually covered him. Carefully climbing to the top, he peeped out of the golden leaves and waited for an opportunity. He was scared, sure. He usually was. But his teammates had encouraged him to compete in the Mind Games, as a way to possibly help boost his confidence, and hell if he was gonna let them down.

"Looks like we're off to a grEIGHT start!" Saw cheered from her stand. "There's already so much going on..."

The deafening noise of the crowd's various cheers, hoots, and whistles barraged Woody as he surveyed the rest of the arena. On the edges of their respective sections, Marker and Match seemed to be equally matched (hah) - Match's fireballs weren't doing anything against Marker's stone armor, but she was faster than he was and dodging all of his hits. Barf Bag had finally caused Gelatin to wipe out with her wave, and Donut was advancing on both of them, using his

telekinesis to bring a two floating plastic boxes with him.

But... where was Leafy?

Woody suddenly felt that prickling on the back of his "neck" that meant he was being watched. He leapt out of his tree just in time to avoid being violently blown out of it by an unusually strong gust of wind. Thankfully, he managed not to fall flat on his face.

"Ooo, looks like Leafy almost managed a sneak attack on Woody down there!" Puffball noted.

From above and behind him, Leafy smiled apologetically. "Sorry, Woody! But I won't hurt you. I'll just try to tire you out!" She sent another gust of wind at Woody and he scrambled out of the way. She floated after him.

In Barf Bag's section, Gelatin broke the surface of the water and spluttered, "Man! I'm all soggy again!"

Barfy shrugged. "Sorry."

She then proceeded to wrap him up in a giant watery fist. "Nice water formations from Barf Bag," 8-Ball commented monotonously.

Gelatin struggled for a second, before remembering his metal chunk and lobbing it at Barf Bag. She tried to block it with some ice, but it broke right through and she was forced to dodge out of the way. Her concentration loosened and Gelatin freed himself, rapidly trying to swim back to his metal-filled section.

There he found Donut waiting for him with two plastic boxes in tow. He threw one at Jelly, who sidestepped it and countered with sending a sheet of iron flying at the pastry. Donut deflected it with his other box, giving Gelatin enough time to mentally lift up several more shards of metal from the ground. Donut glanced at them and gulped. "Oh, boy."

Nearby, Leafy's strategy was working. Woody hadn't been hurt in the slightest, but he was starting to get fatigued from running in circles

and sometimes managing to block her blows of air with overgrown grass or bushes. Her having the high "ground" put him at a serious disadvantage.

Ground... Woody skidded to a halt. The solution was so simple, he was surprised he hadn't thought of it earlier. Finally turning to face Leafy as she prepared another sphere of spinning air to lob at him, he willed a vine to shoot up from the ground and grab Leafy.

A vine did just that and rapidly wrapped itself around her right leg, effectively attaching her to the ground. The unexpected tether threw off her aim completely and her shot went wild. That gave Woody the time to grow two more vines off the ground and take control of her hands. She struggled, and he faltered, but continued after a second, tightening the vines around her so that she was constricted but not hurt.

Woody stepped back and waited. After a moment, it was clear that Leafy wouldn't be able to free herself anytime soon. "Yes!!" he cheered, pumping his fist in the air.

8-Ball noticed. "Huh! An impressive move from Woody. He's managed to completely ground and immobilize Leafy."

But the celebration was short-lived. There was a movement in the corner of Woody's eye, and a decent-sized rock sailed past his face, missing him by inches. Another glimpse to his right revealed Marker advancing on him, hands wrapped in stone gauntlets. Behind him, there was a small tower of stone, inside of which Woody could only guess to be Match, covered head to toe in rock.

Over on the other side of the arena, Donut was desperately defending himself against Gelatin. The latter now had a ring of metal scraps speedily spinning around him, while simultaneously propelling more and more at the former. Donut could barely block each shard in time, nearly getting decapitated more than once. "Careful, Donut!" Puffball spoke into her microphone, almost tauntingly. "It doesn't look like that plastic block of yours can take many more hits!"

With a jolt, he realized she was right. Several chunks of his plastic block was missing and he realized he probably wouldn't be in the competition for much longer.

But before Donut could give that much thought, a watery lasso whipped out from behind Gelatin and looped around the jello, tightening instantly. Surprised, Gelatin let his magnetic accretion disc drop. "What- hey!"

Donut took the opportunity to telekinetically shove what remained of his plastic at his opponent. At the last second, Gelatin saw it coming and ducked. The block sailed over his head and slammed into Barf Bag instead, pushing her back into the water that she had just emerged from. Her lasso around Gelatin dissolved.

"Oh gosh," he stammered, stepping to the side to look behind Gelatin. "S-sorry, Barfy! Are you alright?"

Barf Bag clambered back onto the shore and spat out a stream of water. "Yeah, I'm fine. That was just unexpected."

Donut breathed a sigh of relief. Immediately, he wished he'd kept that breath as the rest of his air was crushed out of him without warning. Distracted by BB, he hadn't noticed Gelatin getting up again, and now a thick metal band was wrapped around his torso.

Barf Bag's eyes widened, but before she could do anything, Gelatin did the same to her, trapping her arms by her side with a strip of iron. Then, clapping his hands, Gelatin brought his two captives together. The metal bands clanged when hitting each other and stuck.

Breathing out, then chuckling, Gelatin leisurely strolled up to the trapped duo and booped them both on the nose. "Thought you could beat me, eh?~" he teased. "Well, not today, because I am the best 'metalbender' in the world!!"

"Pretty sure you're the *only* one in the world," Donut commented, rolling his eyes. To this, Gelatin just winked and skipped away to see who else was still fighting.

He felt a struggle behind him. "It's no use," he told Barf Bag. "I can

tell we're not getting out of these bands until he lets us out."

"Oh, well." The struggling ceased. "That was still a lot of fun, though!"

"...yeah, actually. I didn't think it would be so at first, but..." Donut smiled. "That was cool. I mean, I'm now terrified of Gelatin, but still."

"That makes two of us, lol."

"Things are getting intense!" Saw shouted. "Barf Bag, Donut, Leafy, and Match have all been restrained, although I could see Leafy possibly breaking out of her vines soon. Gelatin is advancing on Marker and Woody, the latter of which is doing his best to survive!"

It was true. While Leafy had actively tried not to hurt Woody, Marker wasn't doing the same. Woody tried to do what he did with Leafy, wrapping vines and elongating grass blades around the art tool, but Marker's stone was too hard to keep down; he kept tearing right through everything thrown at him. Once again, Woody was growing too tired to continue for long.

Something grabbed his hand, and he was suddenly wrenched away from a boulder that definitely would have crushed him. He then felt something hard and inflexible tightly wrapping around him, rendering his arms trapped.

Gelatin stepped out from behind a tree, with more metal floating in the air behind him. "Sorry, Woodster," he apologized, "but this is *my* fight now." (Woody couldn't have been more relieved.) Marker, seeing his new enemy, lifted several rocks from the earth below and prepared to attack.

But before either of them had a chance to make a move, something exploded behind Marker. He whipped around to see a ring of fire billowing out from the center point of the explosion. Both contestants yelled in surprise and created walls of their respective elements to shield them from the worst of it. Poor Woody wasn't able to move away in time and was burnt to ash, as was Leafy's vine restraints (but not Leafy herself; she was still floating in the air and just out of

reach).

Match emerged from the smoke of the inferno and roared with fury, exhaling a gout of flame from her throat. "Wow!" 8-Ball deadpanned. "Seems like Match isn't done just yet. And with her viney shackles being burnt away, Leafy is back in the fight too!"

Glowering at Marker, Match held out a hand towards him, spouting a powerful stream of fire from her palm. Marker's rock wall protected him, but only for as long as he stayed where he was. Gelatin peeped out from behind his own metal wall, but Match opened her other hand and blasted fire at him as well, causing him to yelp and retreat to safety again.

As for Leafy, she hovered upwards and buffeted Match with winds, but the woodsicle had strong footing. She wasn't budging. What's more, when she looked at Leafy and opened her mouth, another jet of blazing yellow flame shot at the lemon leaf, forcing her to nimbly dodge and weave through the air.

"Unbelievable!" cried Puffball. She, 8-Ball, and Saw were equally stunned. "Match is somehow managing to keep ALL THREE of her opponents at bay with an inferno of fury! I've never seen anything like this before!"

In the stands, Pillow swallowed one more peanut and held out the bag to Stapy. "Here."

"I already told you, I don't want any. Or, well, your abilities told you-"

"I know," she interrupted. "I just need you to hold them for a sec."

He decided to take the bag. "Okay..."

Back down in the arena, Gelatin was having a particularly rough time. While Leafy could dodge and Marker's stone barrier could probably withstand lava, the ferocious intensity of Match's fire was taking toll on his own wall. It was turning red-hot and beginning to melt, and the hotter it got, the harder it became to keep it in place. Gelatin wiped sweat that was both formed from heat and exertion out

of his eyes.

Suddenly, he felt something loosen greatly and realized that his magnetic powers no longer applied to the 'metal' in front of him; it had melted too much. He leapt out of the way, and just in time, too - the flames tore a hole through his barrier and would have absolutely obliterated him had he still been standing there. He landed in a clump of overgrown grass next to Woody's remains, plus the metal band the balsa slab was previously restrained with.

Match, seeing him dive away, began to move her left hand and the fire that spewed from it towards where he lay. Marker used this momentary distraction to place a well-timed attack. Curling his hand into a fist, he punched it up. The ground underneath Match responded, instantly jutting out of the ground before she had time to react. The force launched her far into the sky, causing her waves of fire to suddenly cut out and also making the crowd gasp.

She reached the apex of her 'flight,' hovered comically in the air for a moment, then began to plummet towards the crowd below. Various objects shrieked and scrambled out of their seats, not wanting to be hit; while others did the same, but with the purpose of trying to catch the falling firestarter.

The only peaceful one nearby was Pillow. Calmly, she stood up and held out her arms just in time to neatly save Match. "Nice, like, snatch," Match complimented dizzily before burping out a small puff of smoke and promptly passing out.

Stapy stared at her while she gently set Match on the floor and sat back down into her seat. "I have a newfound respect for you and your powers."

Pillow smiled. "I knew you'd say that."

"Should've seen that coming..."

"I saw it coming."

"Shut."

An exclamation from Saw drew their attention back to the arena.

Marker had been flinging rocks with his mind to try and swat Leafy out of the air, but she was far too nimble.

Finally, though, he tried something else. Closing his eyes to focus, Marker quickly raised his open hand upwards. A mess of dirt and stone exploded from the ground, and out came a large pillar of rock, roughly hand-shaped. Opening his eyes again, he thrust his regular hand forwards in a grabbing motion and his rocky self copied the action, neatly grabbing Leafy out of the air. "Uh oh," she said simply.

Marker yanked his hand down and plunged it into the dirt below him. With impressive speed, the larger hand did the same, slamming into the ground with an earth-shaking *THUD*. When the dust cleared, Leafy was lying face-down in a pile of earthy rubble, alive but knocked out cold.

A sudden silence settled upon the whole scene. Objects in the crowd looked around the arena. Was it over?

Then. Movement in the overgrown grass. Green against green. Without warning, a single metal band shot out of the clumps of plants and folded itself around Marker, startling him. The speed at which it hit him was enough to knock him over.

Gelatin emerged from the grass triumphantly and sauntered over to the purple drawing implement, who stared at him in disbelief. "What- I- I thought Match killed you!" he protested. "She melted your wall! How did you survive? And how do you still have metal?"

The lime jello put his hands on his hips and smirked. "I reused the bit that was around Woody before he lost. And as for the survival part, it's called 'dodging.' Ever heard of it?"

Marker fell dead silent.

Up in the commentator's stands, Puffball was the first to recover her wits. She floated close to her microphone, leaned in, and shouted, *"LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE A WINNER!!"*

And the crowd went wild.

"That was *INCREDIBLE!!"* Naily gushed, now completely awed by Gelatin. "It looked like something out of an anime!"

"Yeah, I *am* pretty cool, aren't I?" Gelatin agreed.

It was about half an hour after the battle ended. Gelatin, the other fighters, and several other contestants (most notably, various members of TIC, Free Food, The Losers, BEEP, and iance) were all together in a lounge-type room built underneath one of the bleachers. Book had recovered Woody when the fight ended, and Leafy and Match woke up not long after. Loser patted Leafy on the back in sympathy once she felt better. Most of the recommended characters had drifted away to wherever they came from, but some stayed behind, hoping to get a chance to talk to one of the fighters when they emerged.

"Seriously, though," Gelatin said, turning to Barf Bag and Donut. "It was great battling against you guys. And I'm not just saying that because I won."

"We had fun too!" Barf Bag agreed enthusiastically.

Donut nodded. "I do appreciate you *not* actually killing me before Barfy intervened."

"Oh, I totally would have killed you," said Gelatin offhandedly. Donut shuddered.

Match and Pencil passed the members of Team Ice Cube on their way over to Marker, who was chatting with Fries and Yellow Face. They paused when the duo approached. "What do you want?" Fries asked gruffly.

"Well, I just, like, wanted to apologize for how I acted in the arena," Match started to explain. "I don't know what, like, came over me, but I never wanted to hurt you. All my showing off before I exploded was just that. So..." She extended a hand. "No hard feelings?"

"Of course not!" Marker exclaimed, quickly grabbing her hand and shaking it. "I was there for the fun, and worse sometimes happens in

Four's contests, anyway, so I'm not fazed!"

Match beamed brightly. "Awesome! Now if you'll, like, excuse me, I gotta go apologize to Woody for accidentally burning him to a crisp." She and Pencil turned on their heels and walked towards BEEP, the members of which were congratulating Woody for being brave enough to have joined the fight.

The mention of Woody reminded Fries of something. He excused himself as well, then followed the two woodsicles to where BEEP was and politely waited for Match to finish apologizing before approaching the balsa slab. "Hey, Woody, well done out there," he complimented. "When I saw how you could manipulate plants like that, I got an idea."

Woody looked at him curiously, which Fries took as a sign to continue. "Do you know what my power is?" A head shake. "Well, Golf Ball and Tennis Ball discovered with me that I can amplify other objects' abilities to a pretty extreme extent. I was wondering if I could help you regrow all the dead grass and trees outside?"

"Hey, that sounds like a great idea!" Nickel piped up. "I've gotten tired of feeling only coarse, dead grass under my feet when walking around."

Balloony and Cloudy nodded agreement, and Woody looked excited at the idea. "Yah!" he cheered.

Another five or so minutes later, and most of the contestants (plus some various recommended characters) were gathered outside, standing in the middle of the plains that were the BFB contesting grounds. Surrounding them, for at least half a mile's radius, was a sea of gray, dead grass, with charred trees in the distance that once used to look as if they were golden.

Fries looked at Woody. "You ready? Remember, if you start to get tired, let me know, but that hopefully shouldn't happen."

Woody nodded. As Fries set a hand on his shoulder, the slab of balsa

knelt down and placed both his hands on the ground. He concentrated hard, trying to fill his mind with the image of healthy grass, green and growing. Woody pushed his power into the earth.

It passed through quite easily. The grass immediately surrounding Woody and Fries had begun to grow rapidly, and within seconds, it looked brand-new, as if the lavapocalypse had never happened.

He pushed harder, imagining his energy spreading underground like a twisting system of roots. The radius of growing grass spread quicker and quicker, changing the blades underneath the nearby objects' feet from dull and lifeless to green and growing. When the outer edge reached the husks of trees in the former forest, those husks almost instantly dissolved into ash; and from those ashes, new saplings arose from their cradle of dirt in more than one shade of gold. Each of them reached adulthood in record time.

But he wasn't done yet. All his life, Woody had been terrified of anything and everything he encountered - sharp objects, bubbles, even his own shadow. His time on BEEP and victory over Gabop in episode 14 boosted his confidence somewhat, but there were still many things that scared him. Right now, though... he could sense that Fries still had lots and lots of energy left to give. He had never felt so strong and unafraid.

So Woody pushed himself to the limit. Drawing one last massive pool of energy from Fries, he forced as much power as he could handle into the earth, filling it with life. All around the field, newly-grown flowers suddenly popped out of the dirt and bloomed, bursting with color and variety; red roses, yellow poppies, purple lavenders, blue cornflowers, orange marigolds, white azaleas, and - of course - pink petalled flowers with yellow centers. And so many more.

Many of the spectating objects' mouths dropped open in wonder and amazement. Woody let his newfound connection with nature slowly wane, the flow of energy in his arms coming to a halt, before standing up. He expected to be beyond fatigued, but he felt completely fine. Fries had more energy than either of them had realized.

Speaking of Fries, his face had broken out into a massive grin. It

usually took a lot to make him smile like that. "That... was amazing." He turned to Woody and raised his hand. "Great job."

"Yah!" Woody agreed, feeling a smile form on his own face and enthusiastically accepting the high-five.

There was still an air of mystery behind the powers that thirty-two of the contestants had recently required. Nobody knew why or his they got them, and the one object that could possibly tell them the answer - Lightning - was still unconscious down in Golf Ball's factory.

Despite that, though, things were looking up.

The sun had set, and mostly everyone was asleep. Only two objects still stirred, meeting each other at the edge of the rejuvenated golden forest.

Cake stopped pacing in circles the moment he spotted Loser approaching. "Oh, thank you for meeting me here, Loser. I don't know what to do!"

"Hey, calm down," Loser soothed. "You sounded pretty stressed earlier when you wanted to meet me in private, and you sound the same now. What's wrong?"

"Just look!"

Cake turned and placed his foot at the base of the nearest tree. After a second, the tree... changed. Loser wasn't sure what was different at first, but a quick comparison between it and the other trees revealed

that this tree had lost a lot of its color. Loser watched in bewilderment as it shriveled and shrunk until it was nothing more than a rotted husk.

He blinked. Cake removed his foot and put it back on the ground. *"I have powers like the others,"* he whispered, frightened, "but *why?* And why is it so... terrible?"

Loser slowly shook his head. "I don't know, but... I have something to show you, too."

He held out his hand, and a gust of wind blew from it, buffeting the thing that used to be a tree a minute ago. Cake gasped. "You... you have powers too? B-but how? Neither of us were in the mansion when that weird ball of energy hit it last night!"

"Well, yes, but actually... no?" Loser rubbed the back of his head. "I couldn't control air yesterday or this morning. But I discovered by accident that I could do it a bit earlier, after I'd patted Leafy on the back for being in the games. I think I inadvertently... stole them from her."

Cake gawped at him. "What?? You gotta return them!"

"I will, I will! But... I don't know how yet."

Something suddenly clicked in Loser's head. Last night, when the mansion had collapsed...

~ The yellow cuboid stepped up to the mansion and put his hand on the front door's handle when a wall of light suddenly pushed him backwards. He tumbled down the front steps and landed on his feet. "What the heck? ~

"Cake..." he started. "Last night, you touched that sphere of energy... right?"

~ A shimmering sphere of... something *was surrounding the mansion. Cake went up and touched the barrier, but it blasted him backwards as well. He landed right next to Loser. ~*

"Y... yeah, I did."

"I think... I think that's what gave us powers, too. Even though we weren't inside the mansion with the others when it collapsed."

They were both silent for a moment. "Hey," Loser said. He considered putting a hand on Cake's shoulder, but decided against it, given his apparent ability. "Can you do me a favor?" Cake nodded. "Don't tell anyone else about your power, alright? If they figure out you got yours by touching... whatever that energy orb was, then they'll realize I got a power too. And I don't want anyone to know just yet. I have to figure out how to return Leafy's power to her first."

Cake nodded again. "Yeah. Yeah, that makes sense."

They stood in silence for another moment. "Well," Cake said awkwardly, "I think I need to sleep now."

"Me too... good night."

"Good night. Sleep well!"

"I will."

But Loser did not sleep well.

It wasn't anything physical. His bed of recently-created grass was quite comfortable, and it was peaceful outside. Inside his mind, however, he kept recreating the scene where he used Leafy's airbending. It was only for a short moment at the time, but somehow, it was an exhilarating feeling. The feeling of power.

He wanted more.

Finally, he rose. Slowly, carefully, as to not disturb any of the other members of The Losers sleeping nearby. He tip-toed away until he was sure he wouldn't wake them, then walked normally (but still quietly) over to the nearest other contestant - Basketball. Loser reached out, then hesitated. Was he really about to willingly do this? Rob someone else's power for a taste of it?

The answer was yes.

Gently, ever-so-gently, Loser rested his hand on Baskie's shoulder. The sports globule didn't stir, and Loser breathed a silent sigh of relief. He then closed his eyes and concentrated, imagining the power flowing from her body and into his own.

It came surprisingly easily. He opened his eyes, the process having only taken a few seconds. Removing his hand, Loser tried to remember what Basketball had said earlier that day about the way she used her ability. Something about a dial in her mind?

He tried it, and suddenly began to slowly float upwards, gravity no longer applying to him. The rush of energy he felt was incredible. Individually, the other contestants' powers were strong. But if he could get all of them...

Quickly, but still staying silent, he reapplied normal gravity to himself and speedily began walking to other contestants nearby, first taking Barf Bag's power, then Balloony's, then Marker's. However, Marker almost woke up. Loser jerked his hand away as Marker shifted around, murmuring something sleepily, before returning to a deep slumber.

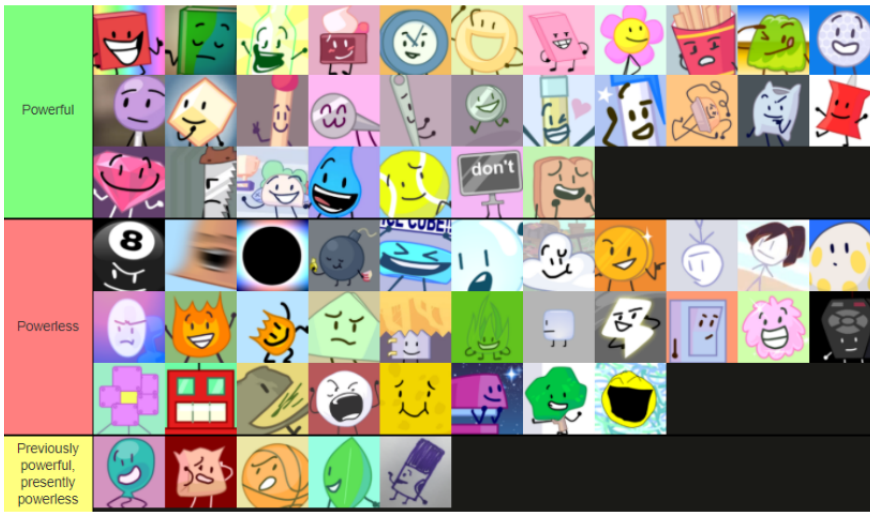
Loser stood up and began to walk back to where he had been 'resting' before, deciding to try and actually sleep; nearly getting caught by Marker had jolted some sense back into him, and if he took too many abilities at once, the others would likely get suspicious. That was fine with him. After all, he was now five times more powerful than the average contestant.

If he played his cards right, he could eventually be infinitely more powerful than all of them combined.

hell yeah motivation for Powerless has returned

also, last chapter, when I emphasized that only the 32 contestants who were in the mansion when it collapsed were the ones with powers... yeah I obviously misled yall about that LOL

this chapter was really fun to write!! it came out longer than I expected (in terms of word count) but that's ok



the balance of power begins to shift ;)

Powerful

[A/N: 10k reads? I love you guys ❤]

The next day

It was a lovely morning. The weather was calm and agreeable, as it always was in Goiky; the sun shone down on the newly rejuvenated fields and forests, always warm but never unpleasantly so, and any thought of rain or snow simply didn't exist. The objects living there never got tired of the balmy, peaceful, unchanging environment.

It was nearing noon. Everyone was up and about at this point - either wandering about amiably, or chatting with friends, or showing off their still-new powers, if they had any. Most objects were concentrated in that area between the bathroom patio and the golden forest; the main site for a contest whenever one was going on. Everyone's favorite spot.

Well, at the very least, it was Loser's favorite spot. That alone bumped up the popularity of the area significantly.

The golden cuboid himself was currently surrounded by several other objects. He was often the center of attention, but today, he happened to just be in the *literal* center of the crowd, and was only talking to a couple others at once, Cake included.

That would soon change.

Another small group of objects - Eraser, Balloony, and Naily - purposefully strolled through the crowd and close to Loser, but not too close. He noticed them and paused the conversation to wave. "Hey, guys! What's up?"

The three of them exchanged glances that he couldn't quite interpret. Instead of responding to his greeting, however, they turned around. "Hey!" Naily shouted, addressing the rest of the crowd. "Can you all listen up for a sec? We got something really important to say!"

It took a few moments, but everyone else - not all the contestants, but everyone who was nearby enough to have heard Naily - halted their conversations and looked towards the trio expectedly.

"Thanks," Eraser said. "Anyway, this might be a bit blunt, but Loser stole someone's power yesterday."

He pointed accusingly at the celebrity, who looked shocked. So did everyone else; nobody was sure what to say for a second, so Eraser took the opportunity to continue. "You all know how my super power is super hearing, right? Well, last night, I was lying awake trying to sleep, when I overheard Loser and Cake talking about something..."

He proceeded to explain how Cake had discovered his own power and told Loser, and how Loser in turn revealed to Cake that he'd accidentally taken Leafy's airbending, and how they theorized that they got those powers from touching the energy sphere that surrounded the mansion two nights previously, at the party.

"I remember that," Liy piped up from somewhere in the crowd. "I was outside when that happened - they both tried to get inside, but the weird bubble thing just repelled them."

Several objects turned to look at the mansion, the ruins of which were still lying in a heap across the field. Several more stared at Loser and Cake with confusion and curiosity. "Loser, is this true?" Gaty asked cautiously.

Loser put on a smile - one that radiated apology, but also confidence. "Sadly, yes. But it happened by accident. I would have told Leafy the moment I found out, but I wanted to try and find a way to reverse it before saying anything. No harm, no foul, right?"

"Yeah!" Cake agreed. Many others nodded at this as well, satisfied. "Hang on!" Eraser shouted. "There's more!"

Loser's smile twitched nervously, but it was barely noticeable. "After that, I *definitely* couldn't sleep," the pink parallelogram went on. "And after a while, I heard someone get up. I looked around and saw Loser sneaking about. He went up to Basketball while she was sleeping, touched her forehead, and *purposely stole her power,* then did the same to Marker, Balloony, and Barf Bag."

At this, several cries of outrage arose from the listeners. Some were yelling at Loser, but most were directed towards Eraser, not believing him, or not wanting to. "I have proof!" Eraser yelled, and everyone instantly shut up. He turned to Balloony and Naily and nodded.

Balloony took over. "So, uh, I don't know how many of you know, but after the whole mansion thing, I gained the ability to be invincible. I couldn't be killed, which was actually really convenient. But if what Eraser is saying is true, then..."

Reluctantly, he picked up Naily, turned her point to his face, and closed his eyes as he slowly brought her closer and closer, until

pop

Naily dropped to the ground. Everyone stared at Balloony's remains for several seconds, stunned, before slowly rotating to look at Loser. A bead of sweat rolled down his head as he felt a few dozen pairs of eyes on him.

Then he looked at Cake, and his composure almost broke when he saw his close friend's expression. "Loser..." Cake nervously began. "Did... did you really...?"

"No, no!" Loser shook his head vigorously, trying hard to keep his look of confidence intact. "I don't remember doing that. I must have been... sleepwalking." He latched onto the weak defense. "I'm pretty sure I've sleepwalked before. My powers must have made it more extreme, or something-"

"No."

The crowd parted to see who had spoken. Donut was staring at Loser from several feet away. "There are two parts to *my* powers," the

pastry began to explain. "Telekinesis, and mind reading. I discovered it when talking to Golf Ball and Tennis Ball yesterday. After that, I didn't read anyone's minds purposely, to respect privacy, but I just took a glimpse into Loser's mind now. And he *was* awake when he took those other powers, and he ABSOLUTELY knew what he was doing. And what's more-" Donut pulled out something from behind his back and brandished it; his diary. He was visibly angry now. "Loser had this when he got eliminated, and read through the whole thing. That's a *seriously* insulting breach of my privacy. And he claimed that he hadn't when I confronted him about it, then changed his answer later on when I did it again. I don't know what you all saw in Loser before today, but I hope you all know now that he's nothing but a dirty, stinking *liar."*

A deadly silence settled upon the group. Once again, everyone turned back to look at Loser, and this time, their stares weren't full of confusion, but of anger.

Cake's alone wasn't angry; rather, it was completely covered in disbelief. "Loser... y-you..." he stuttered.

More drops of sweat appeared on Loser's body as the crowd began to slowly close in on him. "I- I promise, I can explain-"

"Save it," a new voice snapped, cutting him off. Or rather, it was still Loser's voice, just coming from someone else's mouth. Teardrop pushed to the front of the crowd, looking more pissed off than anyone else there. "Do you know what it's like?" she said, using his voice so that he couldn't. "Being misunderstood for your entire life? Being mute is hard. Nobody paid attention to me, because they all thought I never cared about anything because I 'didn't' speak. I've had to fight hard to get any messages across. But while being mute taught me a lot of valuable skills, I'm infinitely grateful to suddenly have this incredible power that grants me the ability to speak. Sure, it's unorthodox. But I wouldn't give it up for anything in the world! What right do you think you have, trying to steal abilities that never belonged to you in the first place?" She was shouting now. "You think that because you're soooooo popular, you can do anything you want and not have to deal with the consequences?! Well, buddy, do I have a message for YOU. You-"

Loser suddenly reached out and grabbed her arm. "What- hey!" she gasped. "Let go of me!! What are you-"

Something changed suddenly. Teardrop's mouth kept moving, but no sound came out. It only took her a second to realize what had happened, and her mouth dropped open. Loser let go of her arm, having already stolen her power. She staggered backwards, trying to form words again, but still nothing. She blinked in astonishment, and regular-sized teardrops began to roll down her face, quickly disappearing as they were absorbed by her body. Everyone else stared at her in shock and pity.

Finally, someone moved. "That's it," Blocky growled. He raised his right arm and used his power, transforming it into a weapon. "I think we've tolerated this jerkwad for long enough." Without wasting another second, he fired at Loser. The shot blasted into the yellow cuboid forcefully, but simply bounced off and slammed into the dirt below instead, creating a brown cloud of dust.

Blocky lowered his arm, bewildered. "What? Why didn't that..."

The dust cloud moved, and Loser shot out of it, grabbing Blocky's blaster arm with a strength the wooden cube didn't know he had. "Don't you remember?" Loser said, almost taunting him. There was a new look in his eyes, something unnerving. "I've absorbed Balloony's power. You can't kill me."

Loser continued to make intense eye contact with Blocky as they struggled. But in a matter of seconds, Blocky's right arm turned back into a normal one. Loser pushed him away and turned his own right arm into what was just recently Blocky's blaster cannon. "But I can kill you."

With that, he lowered his arm and shot a laser - not at Blocky, but at Book, who was just a couple objects objects behind. Despite her yoylemetal protection, she disintegrated instantly. Their current source of recovery, gone in an instant.

And that's when all hell broke loose.

Objects began to scream and flee from the scene as Loser took

potshots at them. A crazed look had appeared on his face; something inside him had snapped. Cake alone stayed put at first, a little bit behind Loser, too shocked to move a muscle.

Donut was just as startled and terrified as the rest of them. But, he remembered, Loser wasn't the only powerful one there. He stepped forwards and raised his arms with the intent to hopefully use telekinesis to restrain Loser when a shimmering purple wall suddenly blocked his way.

"What the-" He looked behind him to see Lollipop holding her own hands in the air to create her impenetrable bubble of energy. Also inside the bubble were the few others who had happened to be close enough to her at the time - Pencil, Pen, Bomby, Needle, and Match. "What are you doing?" Donut asked Lollipop.

"Protecting us."

"But we need to stop him!"

"How?" she snapped back. "You saw and heard everything, Bagel Brain. He can't be killed, and he already has a weapon. But as far as I know, my barrier can't be broken, either. If we stay inside here, we'll be safe. No point in stupidly sacrificing yourself and giving him *more* power."

"Looks like others are already doing that," Needle pointed out.

It was true. The sight of Lollipop's shield had reminded several other objects that *they* had their own powers, and many stopped running to face the yellow cuboid. "Oh boy," Lollipop muttered.

Flower was the first to charge Loser, petals spinning violently, but he just sidestepped her and she face planted into the ground behind. Loser stepped towards her, but froze suddenly, struggling against an invisible force. "I've got him!" Pin's voice emanated triumphantly from the air.

"No, Pin!" Coiny cried out from a distance. "Don't touch him!"

Loser suddenly vanished. At the exact same moment, Pin appeared next to where he was, a look of realization and surprise on her face.

"Oops." She was suddenly shoved aside by an invisible Loser.

"Well, *that's* just perfect," Pencil groaned from inside the bubble.

A bit dazed, Pin got up and grabbed for the space where Loser had been a moment ago, but he was already somewhere else. From a few feet behind Pin, a laser emerged from the air and disintegrated her.

A tense, unexpected, silence rapidly descended upon the field as objects stopped moving and listened carefully for Loser's footsteps, which were almost completely inaudible upon the soft grass.

An exclamation of surprise came from Coiny and all turned towards him as something tried to restrain him. But he quickly wriggled out of the invisible grasp, and before Loser could move again, Coiny whipped out a bucket of paint and tossed it desperately at a spot on the grass. The paint hit something in the air and immediately made Loser completely visible again.

"Yes!" Coiny cheered. Loser managed to wipe some paint out of his eyes and mouth, but the rest was already beginning to harden on his body. He cursed under his breath and became visible again, then proceeded to promptly blast Coiny with his arm cannon before the poor currency could dodge.

In the section of the golden forest nearest to where the carnage was going on - which was still quite some distance away - Clock was wandering around, simply enjoying the beauty of the trees. Woody had done an amazing job the previous day.

An odd noise reached his ears, one he was vaguely familiar with but couldn't quite place. A... he didn't know how to describe it.

So he did his best to follow the noise. It led him to the edge of the forest, where the density of the trees lessened and eventually disappeared altogether. There, Clock got a good view of the entire mess caused by Loser. He gasped. What? What was happening? *How* was it happening? Why was Loser killing so many objects?

He didn't know the answers, but he knew he had to do *something* if he

could. Clock quickly called upon his ability and felt the movement of time start to slow and grow cold until it stopped completely. Not wasting any frozen time, he sprinted to where the chaos was occurring.

Unfortunately, time is an extremely powerful force. It always wants to move forwards, and when it is denied that privilege, it pushes and pushes and pushes until whatever barrier it has struck gives way and allows it to continue freely. Because of this, Clock knew that he only had approximately two 'minutes' before he collapsed from the sheer exhaustion of holding back a nearly unstoppable force. And, also unfortunately, as he was quite a distance away from everyone else, most of this precious frozen time was consumed by the journey there, even though he ran as fast as his legs would take him.

Clock finally arrived, panting heavily. He would have been sweating profusely had he not felt frozen to his core. The very air around him almost felt as if it was a tundra lake, oppressing and absent of heat.

He took in his surroundings as quickly as he could. Loser himself was the obvious center of attention, covered in dried paint and facing Pie. He had his cannon arm pointing at her, and a laser was stock-still in the freezing air, already on its way to hit the baked dish. Pie herself was apparently leading Black Hole over to Loser and had a startled expression on her face, having seen the laser beam. Right behind Loser, Flower was about to attack, unnoticed, and Bottle was also advancing on him from farther away. Cake stood some feet from Loser, and even if time itself hadn't been frozen, he still wouldn't have been able to move from shock. Even further away than Bottle was Lollipop and her shield, which enveloped Donut, Bomby, Needle, Pen, Pencil, and Match. Everyone else had already fled or could still be seen running away.

Clock absorbed all this in about five 'seconds.' But there was still much information he was missing - why Loser was doing what he was doing, how he had gotten Blocky's arm cannon, and more. Despite this, if so many objects were fleeing or had already fled from Loser, Clock surmised that it would be hard to stop him. And, he suddenly realized, *he* didn't even have any actual plan for what he would do when he got there.

A cold trickle of dread down his back somehow managed to add to his already-frozen body. The very edges of his vision started to darken, and Clock knew he was out of 'time.' In a last-ditch effort to do *something* before passing out from exhaustion and letting time flow once more, he dragged himself over to the surprised Pie and lunged in front of her.

Both Loser and those protected by Lollipop's shield were watching Pie when Loser fired at her, so both parties were astonished to witness Clock materialize from thin air and take the shot for her, disintegrating immediately.

"What?" Pen commented, flabbergasted. The others felt the same.

The moment of surprise was more than enough to let Flower leap at Loser, her petals spinning around her head at an incredible speed. They hit Loser and bounced off, sparks flying everywhere and nearly setting the grass alight. Both objects staggered back from the blow, but Loser recovered first, swiftly lifting his arm up to blast Flower in the face and obliterate her.

He turned just in time to be swarmed by a wave of pies - specifically, clones of the no-longer one-and-only Pie. He was immediately pinned down, unable to fight back against the sheer number of baked goods. Even his power absorption wasn't working; he deduced he would have to get to the original Pie to take her ability, but she was a ways away, with Black Hole floating over her head.

"Don't worry, Pie!" a voice chirped cheerily. The clones paused for a second before getting shouldered aside by Bottle, who had arrived. "I'll help you hold Loser down!"

Pie's eyes widened, and Black Hole shook himself from side to side. "Bottle, don't!" she shouted.

But too late. Seconds after Bottle had grabbed Loser's arms, she felt the strength being drained out of her. It only took a single slap from him to shatter her into a million glimmering shards of dust. Her stolen super strength subsequently allowed him to easily push away

any clones that tried to restrain him afterwards.

Pie stepped backwards in a rare moment of visible panic. Before she could properly flee, though, Loser ran up and grabbed her arm, swiftly absorbing her power before slamming her against the ground. She exploded violently, her blueberry filling adding a new layer to Loser's already painty covering.

Black Hole had finally had enough. His goal was to prevent death whenever he could. Despite that, if it wasn't for Balloony's stolen immortality, he would have killed Loser then and there, as he agreed with Pie when she said earlier that sacrificing the life of one to save the lives of many was better than leaving the life of one to snuff out many other lives. But because death was no longer an option, what Black Hole did instead was different; he went as close to Loser as he could and trapped him in his accretion disc. "There," he said confidently. "Super strength won't help you if you're floating helplessly through the air."

Quickly, Loser cycled through the stolen powers in his mind to see what he had at hand. A thought struck him - one of the powers he had absorbed last night. Basketball's power, which was the ability to manipulate the gravity of individual objects. And Black Hole was all about gravity. Holding the image of a dial in his mind, he held out a hand to Black Hole and, with extreme effort, set the dial to zero. No gravity whatsoever.

Gravity suddenly gone, Black Hole vanished from existence and Loser dropped to the ground, free.

He took a deep breath before looking around. Everyone else had already run away. Everyone except Cake, still frozen in place... and a little group of objects protected by a purple bubble of energy.

The cube decided to calmly stroll over to Cake first.

The seven objects inside the bubble watched apprehensively as Loser made his way over to Cake, talked to him gently, and laid a hand on his shoulder. Having seen how Loser had stolen the other object's

powers, nobody needed to be close to know what the contact meant. Before long, Cake finally scrambled away from Loser.

The cube then turned towards them and started a slow walk over. "Uh, Lollipop?" Pen whispered. "How's that shield holding up?"

"Just fine," she whispered back. "I can hold this up for a long time if necessary."

Loser reached them and stared at them blandly through the shimmering barrier. "I don't suppose you'll let me in?" he wondered.

Needle answered this by spitting on the ground in his direction with contempt. Loser raised a single eyebrow.

He raised his right hand, flexing his fingers into a fist, then punched the bubble with as much strength as he could muster (which, given that he had Bottle's super strength, was quite a lot). The shield wobbled, but didn't break. Everyone inside flinched instinctively, including Lollipop, but hers was so subtle that Loser didn't see.

The cuboid nursed his right hand, then got an idea. The objects inside watched in horror as he created one, two, four, *ten* clones, which quickly surrounded the energy shield. All ten doppelgängers then began to rapidly slam the bubble with both fists, over and over and over. It flexed dangerously, but constantly held fast. With every blow, Lollipop flinched slightly again and again, but Loser kept failing to notice. The others huddled around her in the center.

Finally, it stopped. The clones disappeared one by one as Loser realized he couldn't get through by force. So instead, he rotated on the spot and began to leisurely walk away.

Those watching were extremely confused by this action. "What's he doing?" Donut wondered. "After all *that,* there's no way he'd just... give up."

Lollipop gritted her teeth. "I don't know, but if he comes back here and tries that again, I don't think I'll be able to hold this up for much longer." The six other objects there saw for the first time that Lollipop was trembling a dangerous amount. Sure, the shield was

unbreakable, but the more force applied to it, the more tired she got.

"Maybe he-" Pen gasped. "Oh, no. He almost definitely *is* looking for Naily. Can't she teleport through walls?"

"Maybe he's looking for Taco," Needle added. "She can *walk* through walls."

Bomby put his hands to his head. "What are we going to do??"

"Oh!" Pen gasped again. "I can get us out of here!" He uncapped himself and knelt down and quickly doodled something on the ground. The grass shimmered and was replaced by a rectangular doorway into what appeared to be...

"Are those the original contesting grounds?" Needle wondered.

Pen nodded. "Loser's never been there, and it's so far away that even if he knew where it was or even that we were there, it'd take him forever to get there!"

Without any more hesitation, Needle leapt through. Bomby followed her, but before Pen got the chance to jump through himself, Donut grabbed his arm. "Wait." he told him. "How do we get rid of this doorway? There's no point in escaping if Loser can follow us through."

The ballpoint's face fell. "Oh... I actually don't know. I've only ever drawn doorways on sheets of paper before, which I would just rip up afterwards."

Donut's stomach dropped and his face turned pale. Lollipop groaned with exasperation, but Match stepped forwards. "Pencil and I can stay behind," she offered.

The other four objects still there swiveled around to look at her. "What?" asked Pencil, dumbfounded.

"Think about it, Pence-Pence." Match's expression was forlorn. "Your eraser can erase, like, anything now, so it can probably erase this doorway. You three go through, and I'll, like, hold Pencil and use her head to get rid of this portal thingy."

A range of emotions shifted through Pencil's face briefly before finally settling on acceptance. She sighed. "You're right. I gotta say, though, I wasn't expecting you to be so selfless to offer yourself to stay behind. And I wasn't expecting myself to help you."

"This is, like, bigger than us."

Without another word, Donut and Pen dropped through the portal. Lollipop inched towards it gradually, waiting until Match had Pencil in her grasp before finally letting the bubble drop and falling through the doorway. The moment she was gone, Match pushed Pencil's eraser head along the ground back and forth, and within seconds, the doorway was gone. Both girls breathed out a sigh of relief.

Match's sigh suddenly turned into a strangled gargle as Loser appeared without warning and grabbed her. (Or rather, it seemed as if he had appeared; the girls simply hadn't been paying attention as he ran up to them.) It took only a moment for him to absorb her power and snap her in half before grabbing Pencil.

The woodsicle chuckled, knowing she was about to die but still wanting to gloat. "Too late, *Loser.* The others already got away, and you're not gonna find them. You may be powerful now, but as long as *someone's* still out there - even if you get everyone else here - there's still a chance they can take you down." She realized something else. "And what's more, you can't even take *my* power!" she crowed. "You don't have the head of an eraser? Whaddya say to *that?"*

Loser stared her dead in the eyes, and she defiantly stared back. "Do I look like I need *your* power?" he said slowly, before using Cake's ability to drain the life out of her. Pencil dropped to the ground, nothing more than an empty husk.

Lollipop fell out of the doorway leading to South Goiky and immediately collapsed onto the grass from exhaustion. Barely a moment later, the doorway vanished, and the others sighed with relief. Unknown to them, at the same time, Match and Pencil were simultaneously releasing relieved sighs across the planet.

Donut sat down hard on the grass, doing his best to let his heart rate slow down. Needle and Pen were looking around the endless grassy fields, perhaps reminiscing on old times. Bomby was staring off into a distance with a look in his eyes that Donut couldn't decipher.

Nobody uttered a word for several minutes before Pen finally broke the silence. "So," he said, "now what?"

None of them had an answer.

Powerless

"So... now what?"

Pen's words from half an hour ago echoed in Donut's head. Nobody had spoken again since then, but the five of them had silently and unanimously agreed that they needed a little bit of time to process everything that had happened. Well, the four of them - Lollipop was out cold at the time, too exhausted to stay awake after Loser's brutal onslaught against her shield.

It appeared now, though, that she was finally awake, even though she didn't look very rested. Donut sighed as he stood up and walked towards the others as they congregated, his eyes meandering about the fields as he did so.

He barely even remembered competing in BFDIA; his time there had been so short. The plains were somehow even flatter than the BFB contesting grounds, with the grass being a much lighter shade of green. There were almost no trees or structures around; in fact, the only things visible in the area besides the contestants were the old contest wheel and elimination area, as well as the Evil Forest way, way to the north. The platforms on which the host would stand when performing Cake At Stake were crumbling with age, and the seats for the contestants in danger had mold growing on some parts. It'd been years since any living thing had resided in the area.

After a slow moment, he met up with the others and sat down with them. An uneasy silence settled over the small group for a minute, before Lollipop stated, "Well?"

"Well, what?" Needle glanced at the candy.

"Well, are we going to figure out what we're doing next, or are we just going to sit here like a bunch of idiots?"

Pen spread his hands in the air. "Where do we even begin on that front?"

Donut sighed. "We need to stop Loser. Stop him from... killing everyone else over there, I guess."

"But how?"

That was the part nobody had figured out yet.

Rubbing her forehead, Needle glanced over at Donut. "Donut... I..." She sighed deeply. "I want to apologize for... not listening to you earlier. Or, I guess, not you per se, but just not listening in general back in episode 7. You were one of several others to be the first to see Loser for what he really was back then. I was still entranced by his popularity and..." She buried her face in her hands. "Jeez, I feel terrible."

"Hey," Pen replied softly. "It's alright. You weren't the only one."

"Yeah, but... how did so many of us not-"

"I think I get it now," Donut interrupted. "Of course, I've been extra biased against Loser after he stole and read through my diary, but I think I know why so many of you guys continued to trust Loser, even after that lie in episode 7. 'It was just one little lie, right?' Well, maybe. But I think you guys just missed a point, the point being this: if Loser had lied about the poppers to seem popular, then... what other things had he lied about to gain our trust?"

It was silent for a bit. "At least now we know he was hiding psychopathic tendencies," Lollipop snorted derisively. "Would've been useful to have learned *that* earlier. But that still brings us back to my original question: what the heck are we doing next?"

"Let's try starting with the abilities we know Loser already has." Needle started to count off on her fingers. "He can't be killed; he has at least two different methods of killing others; he can manipulate gravity, air, water, earth, and possibly fire, if Match didn't get away in time; he can go invisible... he has super... strength..."

She faltered. With each point she made, it was becoming clearer and

clearer just how much trouble they were all in. "So it's basically impossible to stop him already. Wonderful," muttered Lollipop.

"Hey, d-don't think like that!" stuttered Pen, trying to stay somewhat optimistic. "What d-do *we* have? I can make doorways to places. Donut can read minds and has telekinesis. Lollipop can make indestructible barriers. Needle...? I don't know what you can do. You *were* in the mansion when it collapsed, right?"

"Yeah, I was. I can move through mirrors into this weird dimension Golf Ball calls the mirror... realm..." Her eyes lit up as an idea struck her. "...and I can take others with me! GB and TB discovered that when we were experimenting together with my powers. We also discovered that it's impossible to leave the realm without me! I can trap Loser inside!"

"That's great!" Pen exclaimed, his eyes lighting up as well. "How do you do that?"

"I... oh." The hope on her face was suddenly extinguished. "I can only take others with me... if I make contact with them."

"...and if you make contact with Loser, then he can just take your power and strand *you* in the mirror realm," Lollipop finished.

Once again, silence settled upon them heavily.

"If Donut maintains contact with Needle, Donut could use his telekinesis to move Loser through a mirror," Bomby piped up.

The other four looked at him in surprise. He'd been so quiet since they'd arrived at the old contesting grounds, they'd almost forgotten he was there. Bomby looked at their faces and blinked. "I mean," he backpedaled, "maybe. It's just a thought."

Donut thought about it. "Would that really work?"

"Only one way to find out."

"But we don't even have a mirror."

"Leave that to me," Pen volunteered, before uncapping himself and

drawing a quick doorway on the ground. It solidified in the blink of an eye and he jumped through. A few minutes later, he returned with a mirror as tall as him in tow. "Got one," he grunted. "Yellow Face's warehouse has *so* much stuff in it."

"Yellow Face? Urgh." Lollipop shuddered. "If this wasn't such a dire situation, I wouldn't want anything to do with that vile salesman."

The writing utensil propped the mirror on the ground, steadying it from behind. "Ready."

Needle placed her hand on Donut's shoulder, then glanced around to look for objects to lift. "Uh, Bomby? Lollipop? Either of you want to-"

"No thanks." Lollipop.

"I'll do it." Bomby.

The pastry nodded and raised his right hand, which in turn, lifted Bomby into the air. Gently - he didn't want to hurt his friend by throwing him into the mirror if their plan didn't work - Donut sent the explosive towards the reflective surface. Closer and closer, inch by inch, until-

He slid right through as if the surface was no more than air.

Needle gripped Donut's shoulder tightly in surprise. "Oh- oh my needle factory- it worked!" she exclaimed excitedly. A wave of relief washed over Donut and the others. Their idea might actually be a viable one.

BFB contesting grounds, fifteen minutes later

The patio in front of the bathroom buildings. A well-known location, and often the gathering place for contestants to hang about; once, it was even the site of various Cake At Stake ceremonies.

The door on the right of the shed-sized building slowly creaked open. A tan-colored object poked outside, furtively looking at their surroundings before retreating.

"What's it look like out there?" Needle asked Donut as he closed the door. The inside of the room had a few sinks and two stalls, as well as a very out-of-place doorway on one wall. The edges fluctuated slightly, and on the other side was a green, grass-filled field, Bomby standing some way away from the entrance.

Donut sighed and massaged his forehead. "Not great. There's a pit dug out - or, I suppose, probably earthbended out *(earthbent? idk)* - right in front of the patio, and I saw several objects trapped in there. There were some... corpses around the edge of the pit, so I guess it took a bit for Loser to corral the survivors in there. Loser was watching over the pit, but he had his back turned, so he didn't see me."

"That's horrible." Needle gulped. "Did you see Fries, Naily, or Pillow?"

"No, thankfully. I didn't see them anywhere, alive or dead."

The sewing implement blinked and breathed out a sigh of hopeful relief. For it would have been bad for them if Loser had gotten ahold of any of the aforementioned objects' abilities; Naily's teleportation may allow him to escape them, Fries' amplification would increase the powers he already had tenfold, and Pillow's future-telling would have made it completely impossible to sneak up on him.

Lollipop walked into view on the other side of the portal. "Pen's all set up," she informed. "It's ready."

Needle and Donut looked at each other and simultaneously nodded. It was time.

As quickly and as quietly as they could, they exited through the bathroom's door and closed it behind them, before taking a couple steps to the side. "Hey, Loser!" Donut shouted.

Loser whipped his head around, startled, searching for the source of the voice. "Over here!" Donut called out again. "Yeah, we're talking to you, you liar cube!"

The liar cube in question finally saw them. Smiling, he started to slowly walk towards the duo. Donut and Needle proceeded to do the

same, stepping backwards as to go around the right side of the building. "Is that as fast as you can go?" Needle jeered. "I can crawl faster than that!"

An annoyed expression flickered across Loser's face and he began walking faster. The other two matched his pace. They passed the back edge of the bathroom building, and Donut almost glanced to the side, but Needle whispered to him, "Don't look there. It'll only attract his attention."

He subtly nodded before choosing to call out their foe once more. "Come on, slowpoke! At the rate you're going, you almost look like you're scared of us!"

Loser was sufficiently pissed off by now. Without moving his right arm, he casually transformed it into Blocky's laser cannon. A clear threat. "Now?" Donut whispered."

"Almost..."

They stopped several feet away from Loser, and he halted as well, right at the edge of the bathroom's back wall. "Not close enough," Donut cursed.

With an air of smugness, Loser began to raise his arm gun, but Needle yelled, "Oh, really? You're just going to shoot us from a distance? Come here and fight us face-to-face, you coward!"

The former celebrity glared at her, but she had struck a nerve. Almost reluctantly - although he didn't show it - Loser turned his arm back and began to close the distance between them. About halfway, Needle suddenly shouted, "NOW!"

Loser jumped, a bit startled, and took a split second to swiftly look around, in case there were any other objects around, waiting to ambush him. There weren't, but something shiny caught his eye. He turned to look at the bathroom's back wall, where there was a full-length mirror.

Now, let me explain.

Donut and Needle obviously wanted to lure Loser to the back of the

building. But what Loser hadn't known was that Pen, a couple minutes ago, had created a small doorway on the back wall, one just big enough for him to fit the mirror through sideways. He then rested the mirror against the wall in a way that would both work for what Donut and Needle needed to do, and also cover the doorway that he'd made.

Like most of the other objects - Golf Ball had told several others what she'd learned from experimenting with their abilities - he knew that Needle could walk through mirrors like they were portals. But, as he didn't know what Donut and Needle combined could do, he was understandably confused as to *why* exactly there was a mirror on the back wall. Did Needle plan to ram him through it? Because that was a stupid idea. One touch, and he could trap *her* in there.

He became even more confused (again, understandably) when Donut grabbed Needle's arm with one hand and began to lift the cuboid into the air with his other limb. But despite his confusion, Loser decided he'd had enough of whatever charade his opponents were playing and decided to activate his own rules.

Once Loser was in the air, Donut took a single second to make sure he was lined up with the mirror before extending his hand forwards with as much strength as he could muster. Loser was suddenly telekinetically flying towards the portal at quite a speed, adding to his bewilderment even more. But the last thing Loser did before passing through the glassy surface was thrust out his own arm and then immediately yank it back to his chest, closing his fist as he did so.

Needle suddenly felt her body flying through the air, mysteriously being pulled along at Loser's mental command. Donut, who had been holding onto her arm, instinctively tightened his grip when he felt a tug, but the mysterious force pulling Needle was strong enough to also yank him off his feet. "What-!" he exclaimed.

Although Loser had already slid though the mirror's reflective surface and was no longer actively doing anything, Donut and Needle had more than sufficient kinetic energy to continue soaring through the air and straight towards the back wall. Before either of them really knew what was happening, they both vanished into the mirror.

The mirror realm

Loser emerged on the other side before the others, slamming into the ground and rolling a couple dozen feet before unceremoniously falling flat on his face. Needle and Donut came through a second later, coming to a halt after only sliding ten feet or so.

The first to get up, albeit extremely disoriented, was Donut. He was partially thrown off by whatever Loser had done, but also by the uniquely unusual properties of the mirror realm. For reasons undecipherable, he couldn't feel the ground when he was getting up, or after standing up. The pastry gingerly touched his hands together, but he couldn't feel those, either. It was utterly unnerving.

He suddenly remembered what had happened and looked around frantically. Everything, for miles and miles around, was white, with the ground being slightly off-white. It stretched endlessly into the horizon, occasionally being broken up by rectangular windows or blotches of haze in the air. Behind stood a doorway which gave a view into Goiky; next to him, Needle had just finished standing up; and ahead, Loser was getting to his feet. "Come on, let's get out of here!" Donut grabbed Needle's arm and raced away from Loser, towards their exit.

He did not feel Needle being ripped out of his grip, and had he not happened to have glanced behind him, he altogether wouldn't have noticed. Several dozen feet away, Loser had his hands outstretched and was somehow pulling Needle towards him, who was struggling helplessly in the air.

"No!" Donut cried. Thinking fast, he threw out his own hands and desperately grabbed for Needle. His telekinesis halted the sewing implement's progress midair, approximately halfway between the circle and the cuboid. They were, for the moment, at a standstill.

The jelly-filled pastry grunted with exertion as he fought to keep Needle away from Loser's grasp. "How... how are you doing that?" he asked between breaths.

Loser chuckled. "Simple." It was the first word he had spoken since the encounter outside the bathrooms. "Gelatin's ability allows him to control magnetic fields, doesn't it? And Needle's made of metal..."

It took a second, but Donut visibly flinched as the realization that Loser had absorbed Gelatin's power hit him. He lost his concentration for a split second and Needle jerked a foot closer to Loser. But he shook his head and pulled harder, now fueled by anger. Slowly, but surely, he managed to inch Needle closer and closer to himself.

Unfortunately, Loser realized this as well. Changing tactics, the cuboid began to walk towards Needle, closing the distance much quicker than his magnetism was. Donut nearly panicked and quickly directed one hand to pushing Loser backwards, while still having his other hand focus on Needle. It was working - Loser looked like he was moonwalking as he tried to fight against Donut's mind-over-matter. Once again, Needle drew closer to Donut.

Loser actually growled aloud. Rapidly switching tactics a second time, he, too, gave one of his hands a different job. Donut nearly leapt out of his skin as he suddenly saw a wave of flame emerge from Loser's palm and wash in his direction. He diverted his energy in one hand from pulling to pushing, and barely managed to stop the fire inches from his face with a mental barrier, forcing the firestorm away.

Loser must have taken Match's powers after she and Pencil erased Pen's doorway, he thought glumly. Then: *I might not be able to feel this heat now, but my face is definitely going to be toasted when I get out of here.*

...if I get out of here.

Once again, the two objects were in a deadlock. Each had one hand trying to pull Needle towards himself, but while Loser was focusing flame to shoot out of his other hand, Donut was concentrating on not being burnt alive by using *his* other hand.

It wouldn't last for long, however. Even though Donut was apparently stronger when using two hands for telekinesis, Loser had the upper hand *(haha)* when using only one arm to pull Needle. She slowly began to gravitate towards Loser, as hard as Donut tried to keep her

on his side. On top of that, Loser had started to leisurely stroll to Needle again, but Donut couldn't move backwards any further - he already had his back to the gateway leading to Goiky.

"Why are you doing this?" Donut shouted over the roaring of the inferno. With nothing else working, perhaps reason would prevail. "You already have way more power than any of us! Why try and take *more?"*

"Oh, Donut." Loser shook his head, smirking. "Once you've had a taste of power, it's hard to go back. I don't know how any of you have resisted the urge to... to just rule over those who are powerless. And besides..." His expression darkened. "I don't need all this power *just* for personal gain. I'm surprised you haven't put the pieces together yet."

"Huh?"

"Lightning disappearing, then reappearing later at the party? Us mysteriously getting powers? How did that happen?? The only explanation I can think of is that *they're* responsible. If it's true, then I'm also gathering these abilities to fight against... well, you know who I'm talking about."

"No, I don't!!"

"Yes, you *DO!"* Loser was visibly frustrated. "I'm almost certain that it's them behind this. Bomby, and..."

A thought struck Donut, and he finally understood what Loser was talking about. Bomby's terrible secret. But he had learned of those events years ago; old news. Surely, they hadn't happened yet... had they?

"Donut, you're slipping!" Needle shouted. With a start, he realized that he was, indeed, slipping. He shook his head and refocused his concentration. But Loser had made good progress, and was close to reaching Needle. "Come on!" she yelled again through clenched teeth. "Hit him where it hurts!"

Where it hurts... Donut repeated in his mind.

In his mind.

Of course! He would have facepalmed if he had a free hand. Telekinesis was only *one* of his powers. Being very careful to keep most of his concentration focused on his hands, he physically reached inside Loser's mind and rummaged around inside. *Come on, come on. There has to be SOMETHING in here I can use against y-*

He flinched as he came across a very recent memory, paired with a wave of guilt so powerful it almost broke his concentration. It had been messily tacked down by other emotions, but it was enough. It would have to be.

"Hey! Loser!" he shouted across the void and through the crackling of the flames. Loser paused mid-stride. Donut continued, "You do realize that your reputation is completely ruined, right? Nobody will ever like you again!"

Loser laughed, contempt dripping from his voice. "You think that matters to me anymore? Why be famous and loved, when you can have *power?* Looming future threats aside, I don't need people to bow down to me of their own will, when I can make them do it. I don't need *anyone* to like me now."

"Not even *Cake?"*

The effect of this simple question on Loser was immediate. He flinched so hard that he stumbled backwards and nearly tripped on his own feet. A memory from about an hour ago resurfaced, so recent that the fragile walls of composure he had attempted to build up around it immediately crumbled to the amount of raw guilt it contained. His betrayal towards his best friend.

~ He calmly strolled over to Cake, poor Cake, who was still frozen in place from shock. The bodies of various objects were littered around the field. Many others had survived and fled, but Loser wouldn't worry about them just yet.

The cuboid reached the chocolate pastry and gently laid a hand on his 'shoulder,' carefully extracting the power of death from him. "Cake..." he said softly. "I-"

Light suddenly returned to Cake's eyes, and he flinched away from Loser's grasp. "L-leave me alone, y-you... you m-MONSTER," he spat, tears forming, before turning and sprinting away as fast as his legs would carry him.

Loser nearly broke right there and then. He had hoped that at least Cake would stay... but he could track him down and talk to him later. He pushed down the overwhelming sorrow he was feeling before turning to the only other survivors still nearby - a little group of objects protected by a purple bubble of energy. ~

The moment Loser faltered, so did the concentration on his powers. He accidentally simultaneously let go of Needle and stopped shooting fire at Donut at the same time, allowing the circular object to finally rapidly pull Needle closer.

But Loser recovered faster than either of them thought he would. He raised his eyes to meet Donut's, barely containing unbridled anger. Just as he began to lift his hands once more, Needle slammed into Donut at full force, and her kinetic energy shoved them both backwards through the gateway to Goiky.

BFB contesting grounds

Bomby, Lollipop, and Pen watched the mirror cautiously and apprehensively. Sure, maybe it was dangerous to be there, but if Loser emerged without Needle or Donut, then they wouldn't stand a chance anyway. And they had no way to tell what was happening on the other side - all they could see were their own reflections.

Without warning, Donut and Needle burst through the mirror's surface, scaring the three other objects there half to death. "Oh my gosh!" Pen exclaimed, leaping back. "You can't just DO that!"

Donut and Needle shakily got to their feet. Donut was breathing heavily, suddenly able to feel the strain his prolonged usage of telekinesis had on his body, as well as the burns on his face. He gingerly touched his skin and winced.

"Oh, dear, that looks terrible." For once, Lollipop didn't sound snarky, or sarcastic. "You alright, Bagel Brain?"

"I..." Donut felt completely and utterly exhausted. Looking at Needle, he could tell she felt tired as well, now that she could feel what the strain of almost being pulled apart had done to her. But when he glanced at the mirror...

"...I... I feel... great!"

It finally hit home. "We... I can't believe we did it! We actually stopped Loser!!"

A surge of relief shot through the objects, followed by joy. Pen cheered aloud while Needle and Donut laughed, their exertion almost forgotten. Lollipop and Bomby smiled, but while the former's was one of genuine happiness, the latter's was one of melancholy.

Donut flopped down onto the grass and closed his eyes. "I need a nap," he said, unable to stop giggling as stress release.

"Same here," agreed Needle, before gasping. "Wait! The other contestants are still trapped in that pit!"

"Oh gosh, you're right. Let's go help them out!" said Pen enthusiastically. He, Lollipop and Needle began to head over to the front of the bathroom building. "I'll catch up to you guys in a minute," Donut called after them, the escalation beginning to return to his body.

He closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and relaxed, immediately feeling much better. The grass felt soft and calming under his sugary skin. Much better than the grass back in the old contesting grounds. Woody had really poured his soul into regrowing the fields here.

But even as Donut relaxed, he realized something was still bothering him. A tidbit of what Loser had said, nagging at his mind...

Bomby.

The pastry opened his eyes and slowly lifted himself up to see Bomby sitting nearby. His friend had his legs drawn up and pressed against

his chest with his arms hugging them close, like he was in the fetal position, except that he wasn't lying down. "Bomby?" Donut asked carefully. "Are you alright?"

The explosive shook his head. *At least he's being honest.* "May I ask why?" he continued.

"You wouldn't understand," came the answer. "It's almost too late, anyway."

Donut's suspicion was growing more and more by the second, so he turned to fully face his friend. "Try me. If it's too late for... whatever, then it wouldn't hurt to unload, right?"

Their eyes locked for several moments before Bomby looked away. "...they'll be here soon. Even if I told you, you couldn't do anything," he mumbled, almost too quietly to hear. "None of you could. The power they hold over all of you specifically-"

Donut jumped to his feet when he heard the word *power.* "Is it *them?"* he asked quickly. "The one you've been working with?"

His friend looked startled. "How did you... did you read my mind??"

"No, I would never. I... I found that letter addressed to you, and what you replied, all those years ago."

Again, Bomby looked surprised, before cursing under his breath. "I *knew* I should have burned those."

Which gave Donut all the answer he needed.

Before his teammate could say anything else, the pastry bolted towards the front of the bathrooms, over to where Lollipop, Pen, and Needle were helping the flying objects pull the other survivors out of Loser's dug-out prison. His fatigue had been forgotten. "Guys!" he yelled, catching their attention. "Hurry up and get everyone else up here!"

"Hey, woah! Calm down! What's the problem?" Pen wondered.

"I- it's hard to explain. But we're all in danger, and we need to get out

of here!"

Gaty, who had just climbed out of the pit, blinked in confusion. "But I thought you guys took care of Loser?"

"It's not Loser! It's someone else-"

Ding.

Donut paused. Confused, everyone looked at the left bathroom door, which opened and was revealed to not be a bathroom after all; instead, it looked like the inside of an elevator car. And inside the elevator car were what appeared to be several dozen floating silver bracelets.

"What the..." Lollipop muttered, before one of the bands soared forwards and latched itself to one of her wrists. "Hey!" she complained, immediately using her other hand to try and pull it off. But it was wrapped tight.

Faster than anyone could blink, all the bands suddenly whizzed out of the elevator before the doors closed and leapt towards the other contestants. They slid themselves around arms, legs, and sometimes bodies - one per object - tightening as they did so and locking on. Most of them tried to wiggle, pull, or shake their bands off, but it was futile.

Donut felt a band loop around and squeeze his own right wrist before there was any chance to stop it. Seconds later, he jumped a little as something on the inside of the band poked him in the arm. "Ow!" he exclaimed.

Very quickly, his vision began to twist and swirl. He tried to stay standing, but lost the battle against gravity and toppled to the ground, barely feeling the impact. The last thing he heard was another *ding* as the elevator arrived again, this time, holding an actual passenger. Through blurry eyes, Donut tried to see who it was, but then the world went black.

how the hell do I keep making these chapters so damn long

({ [LOG: 005] })

(A/N: this log is quite the information dump, but I'd recommend making sure to read it all, as it should explain several things.)

[beep]

Today's date is March 20th, 2020. Five days before the supposed scheduled release of episode 16 of Battle For BFDI, but that will be more than enough time for me to finish.

In the previous log, I said that I had finalized the number of subjects that I would give abilities, that being 32. But I have recently thought of 2 more that could provide an interesting variable to the experiment. One in particular.

Listed below are the final - for real this time - 2 new subjects and results of the abilities my experimentation brought to them.

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 052]

(Cake)

Subject 052... what a meek personality. It will be interesting to see how he reacts when he discovers his power, which is the ability to drain the life of any object he touches if he chooses to. Quite frankly, it is a terrible force, capable of killing a lot before it has to "recharge." I wonder if the other objects would be scared of him, if they learned of his power?

~~~~~

[SUBJECT 063

(Loser)

Now THIS one has potential. Simply put, Subject 063 now has the ability to "steal" the abilities of any other object (at least, from the ones I have given abilities to). All he has to do is touch the desired object for a couple seconds, and the transfer will be complete. He can hold as many powers as he wants. (Of course, when I tested this, I also devised a way to return the powers to their original holders, so that the experiment may still happen.)

Note: there appears to be a side effect to this. Whenever 063 gains a power, he begins to crave more, and isn't satisfied until he has it all. Normally, I would attempt to remove side effects such as these. But this one could provide some... EXTREMELY interesting results.

~~~~~

And now that all the subjects are ready, I can log the details of the next procedure: releasing them back onto the BFB contesting grounds. There are several steps to this.

1.) First and foremost, knock them out and erase all memories from the moment I captured them up to when they wake up in the ruins of the mansion on the night of the 24th. This is the most important step, as if any of the following steps fail in some way, and they wake up inside the lab without former memories of the place, I can simply lie and say they're all in here for medical checkups... or something. Perhaps I should think of a more proper response for that. Contingencies...

2.) I must fabricate their fake memories and implement them into their brains. Specifically, this is what they will remember:

- Before March 24th: the minds of those who were alive when episode 15 ended should create some fuzzy memories to fill in the gap they will have between episodes. Since they do not generally DO much between episodes, this is a risk I'm willing to take. Those who were dead when episode 15 ended will simply have the memory of waking up recovered.

- March 24th, pre-party: all the contestants will remember waking up on that morning to find their dead friends recovered and their eliminated friends out of the EXIT. They will also find notes from Four, claiming that he and X "had urgent business to attend to and would not be back for a few days." (This, of course, is a lie. Four and X have been lying unconscious since I initially captured them and their contestants, in two special cells they should not be able to break out of in case they wake.) Later, all of the subjects I have tested on - but not any of the others - will "find" themselves inside the mansion when it collapsed, when in reality, everything up to the point of the collapse is just a fabricated memory.

- Post-party: everyone will wake up for real this time. For the experimented-on subjects, they will wake after the mansion collapse, having gained their new abilities seemingly from thin air. Everyone outside the mansion will not even register walking up a second time. With these in place, hopefully, the fake memories will fabricate a believable scenario for everyone involved to explain the sudden powers.

2b.) Annoyingly, I've had to add an extra step here. I've managed to wipe the memories of every object except for one; for some reason, it appears to be impossible to tamper with 057's memories. Perhaps the fact that he is pure electricity has something to do with it? If I had more time, I would look into it more. Instead, I've chosen to take this opportunity to give 057 a different role. By tweaking the simulated environment I've been using to create false memories for the others, if anyone happens to look up around the time of the mansion's collapse, they can see Lightning flying through the sky and to the top of the mansion. If anyone is smart, they will figure out that 057 is "behind" the power surge. (I'll have to force him into a coma for as long as he needs to be, though. If he was awake, he would tell everyone everything.)

3.) Set up the actual ruins of the mansion for the contestants to wake up in. This step is already mostly done, as I have been taking regular surface trips and adding to the ruins little by little almost every day.

4.) Deploy the clone of subject 049. As 049 is a literal black hole, he was impossible to contain, so I was forced to end his life. However, the other

objects may question his disappearance, so I have created what I believe to be a good clone, complete with 049's memories, beliefs, and a rudimentary copy of the original's gravitational abilities.

5.) Update everyone's power-dampening bracelets to have a second purpose, that purpose being "Recall". Whenever I decide I have enough information and wish to regain control of my subjects, one button press on the main control panel will activate the homing engines in the bracelets. Each band will lock onto their designated object and fly through the air until they wrap themselves around one of their target's limbs - or body, if the target lacks limbs altogether. They will then inject anesthesia into whatever body part they are touching, just enough to knock them unconscious. (For this purpose, I have manufactured bracelets for all the objects - except for my assistant, of course - and not just for my subjects with powers.) At this point, I will be able to help my assistant collect everyone and lock them in their respective cells.

6.) Actually place everybody in position. They'll automatically wake up at the right time on the 24th, not having a single suspicion that their minds had been hijacked. From there, I wait, record whatever happens, and hopefully get some good results. I will initialize Recall whenever I deem fit, which could take any amount of time; two days, two weeks, two months... I am prepared to wait for as long as necessary.

~~~~~

When I first undertook this frankly immense project, it was originally to see if I could find a viable candidate to accept my power via various testing methods. That is still my goal, but now... I've realized I'm enjoying *this. Experimenting on others, toying with their physicalities and pushing them past their limits... it's exhilarating.*

While I'm willing to wait for however long I must, I estimate that subject 063 will not last very long before succumbing to his urges to gain power. When that happens, the experiment should become very intriguing indeed. The moment that that business is finished will be the moment I initiate Recall, and from there, I can swap powers between subjects, and start
~~~~~

anew. I don't know how many times I will be repeating this experiment, though...

This is the end of this recording. It is likely that I will not be making another one for a while, as I will record all the results from this experiment on paper from here. Signing out.

[beep]

If any of y'all have read IDFBC... yeah, this is really similar to some events from there. (But it's not connected to this story!!) I kinda regret just how many parallels there are, but that's mainly because I didn't fully plan ahead when starting this story, and so, these events are what I came up with to fit what I set up at the beginning of the book.

We're nearly at the end now. Only one more chapter left! (...maybe two. But probably one.)

Power

Donut woke up confused.

And sore. *Very* sore. He winced as he got up from his bed (*Bed?* he wondered), his entire front side still stinging from the heat of Loser's attacks. He touched his face gingerly; the "skin" felt dried, and it was definitely starting to stiffen. *I thought that would take a while to get stiff...* he began to think.

...how long have I been out?

Looking around — carefully, as to not twist his injured body too much — he saw that he was inside a small, beige-colored room with a bed, a door without windows, and... well, that was it. The space certainly appeared unassuming. But Donut was willing to bet his diary that the door was locked.

Although still a little woozy from... whatever, he stood up fully and turned to the door. *Maybe I can use my telekinesis to break out of here... but I doubt that I'm strong enough.* Experimentally, Donut raised his hands and tried to push a wave of energy at the door, but absolutely nothing happened. It was then that the baked good also noticed a silver bracelet wrapped tightly around his right wrist. A tiny green light on it flashed incessantly.

A burst of feedback caused him to jump. A speaker which he hadn't noticed before was perched in one of the upper corners of the cell. "Ah, good to see you've finally awoken, 053," an accented voice emitted from the loudspeaker. Donut didn't recognize it. "Someone will be over to collect you shortly. Please cooperate with him or I'll be forced to knock you out again."

The speaker clicked off. Donut didn't know for sure who the voice belonged to, but he could guess pretty confidently, and if *that* was correct, then he definitely knew who was on his way.

Three minutes later, one of his fears was confirmed. The door to his cell suddenly opened without warning, sliding into the wall to reveal a certain explosive standing behind it.

A complex mixture of emotions began to bubble up inside Donut — confusion, anger, betrayal, and a pinch of fear. "Bomby..."

Bomby, for it was he standing in front of the baked good, just looked at him sadly and gestured for him to follow.

Donut shook his head. "No. I'm not leaving until I get some answers."

"I promise I'll explain later, if they'll let me," came the reply. "Just... follow me, please. This is hard for me as well."

Anger began to bubble to the forefront of Donut's emotions, but he did his best to push it aside and just followed Bomby instead. He led him out into a white corridor with seven different doors on both long walls. Each one had a name of a different object above it; Gelatin, Spongy, Firey Jr... everyone from Team Ice Cube, minus Bomby.

One extra door at the end of the corridor led them into a different hallway. This one was much like the last one, with seven other doors embedded in the walls, but this time the names of the different teams were inscribed above the entrances.

As Bomby led Donut down to the end of the hallway, where another door lay waiting for them — an elevator door this time — he continued speaking. "I will say, though," he started in an oddly different tone, "it's a shame about that bracelet blocking your powers. Otherwise, you could save me some explaining by *reading my mind."*

This statement was so unlike Bomby, even in the current context, that Donut just stared at him for a second. But then there was a tiny *beep.* He glanced down at Bomby's hand — hidden behind his palm was a small remote, and he was removing his index finger from a button. Another glance revealed that the light on his own bracelet has now turned red. *Did he just turn it off...?*

As they reached the elevator doors, Donut experimentally probed for Bomby's mind. Surprisingly, he was able to get through. A glimmer of

hope shot through him, but he quickly pushed it aside to focus on his teammate. *If you're seeing these words, Donut, it's because I can't say this out loud; they have cameras everywhere,* he read. *But there's still a way we can stop them and escape. Here's the plan...*

Ding!

The elevator's exit slid open. Donut and Bomby stepped out into a well-lit laboratory room. There were various shelves on the walls with glass fronts, revealing vials, beakers, and other containers inside, each holding their own unique liquid. Papers were organized neatly upon several countertops, and although some parts of the floor were messy, whoever worked or lived here seemed to mostly tidy up after themselves.

Speaking of the lab's resident...

"Ah, there you are." At the room's far wall, a figure turned away from their laptop to look at the duo. Although Donut knew what to expect (more or less), seeing their captor in person for the first time was a little underwhelming.

Immediately, it was obvious that they were an algebralien, like Four and X — even if Donut didn't know who they were, any of the other BFB contestants would have been able to instantly guess their identity. But the resemblance to the show's hosts stopped there. Rather than blue or yellow, this numeral was green all over, and their words were laced with a British accent whenever they spoke.

Two.

"I was getting a bit impatient," Two continued, with a slightly bored look on their face. But their expression brightened rapidly. "Now that you're here, we can start!"

Donut was almost afraid to ask. "Start... what?"

Two shrugged. "I don't know yet. I'll figure it out as I go along. Now, stay there for a second; I need to finish this quickly."

They turned back to their laptop and resumed typing away. Donut met Bomby's eyes, and his teammate nodded. It was now or never.

He took a deep breath. Acting quickly as to not actually think about what he was doing, Donut raised his arms, opened his hands, then closed them and immediately drew them close to his body.

Two suddenly flew towards him, jerked out of their seat from Donut's telekinesis. But faster than either TIC member thought possible, they flipped around midair, dug their feet into the ground until they came to a halt, and effortlessly lifted Donut into the air with their own powers. "Well!" Two exclaimed, a surprised expression painted on his face. "Someone's feisty today! Thought you could best me, eh?"

Donut struggled to escape the telekinetic grip, which just made the numeral chuckle. "It was a good attempt, I'll give you that. You caught me off guard; I didn't realize your bracelet wasn't working. Although, it *did* bring you in earlier...?" They scratched their chin, lost in thought for a moment. "Eh. It must have just run out of power. Bomby, can you go get a spare battery, please?"

Two turned to look at the explosive, and that's when Bomby punched them square in the face. The blow was so sudden that they stumbled backwards purely out of shock at first, but it only took a second for the pain to kick in. "OW!!" they shrieked, losing concentration on Donut and instinctively moving their hands to cover their face.

That was their fatal mistake. Blinded by pain, they were unable to stop Bomby from pushing them hard. At the same time, the instant they let go of Donut, he raised his arms again and yanked Two towards himself with his mind-over-matter abilities. The combined forces of the TIC members were more than strong enough to propel Two straight into Donut's side, where, in a flash of light, they were absorbed.

Because after all, 2 times 0 equals 0.

But the multiplication wouldn't be easy. As soon as Donut absorbed Two, he realized they would still be a problem. When A Better Name Than That had originally multiplied Four and Donut together, Four went quietly (for the most part). But Two was furious and powerful;

they were fighting back, tooth and nail, and Donut wasn't sure he could hold them back. "Syringe!" he grunted, hoping his teammate would know what he intended.

Thankfully, Bomby understood immediately and began to frantically rummage around the room. It took less than a minute, but Donut could feel his grip on consciousness and control slipping away more and more with each passing second.

"GOT ONE!" Bomby suddenly cried, triumphantly holding up a comically large syringe. With barely any hesitation, he stuck it into Donut's head and yanked hard on the plunger's handle. With a disgusting *slurp,* Two's essence was transferred from the pastry's body and into the glass tube.

Donut gasped in relief, nearly toppling from the sudden lack of internal resistance. He still doubled over, however, if only to catch his breath. In between wheezes of exhaustion, he dared to look at the giant syringe, which Bomby had carefully set on the floor. It was full to the brim with green plasma, a pair of eyes floating around inside. Comically, they also had angry eyebrows. The numeral was still furious beyond belief.

But as long as they were trapped inside that syringe, Two was powerless.

Both objects didn't say anything for a minute or two, each of them recovering from a different kind of stress. Finally, Donut looked up at Bomby. "Thank you," he managed to get out, "but... you have some *serious* explaining to do."

There was a little bit of chaos afterwards.

The first thing Donut and Bomby did (well, the first thing after locking Two's syringe in a cabinet) was free everybody else and remove bracelets from those who had powers. Understandably, they were extremely confused on what was going on. The general confusion only increased after Bomby recovered all the dead objects with Two's hand-made Master Recovery Center, since the ones who

died to Loser's power grab weren't even aware that something else had happened.

There were a couple anomalies. Poor Black Hole had to be filled in on *everything;* he had been dead since Two originally captured the objects of Goiky three months ago. On the other hand, Lightning — who had been woken by Two after the second group capture — remembered everything since the initial capture. Loser was still trapped within the mirror realm; Two hadn't had a chance to retrieve him yet, and none of the others wanted to.

As for Four and X, only one object knew where they were, but he hadn't yet had a chance to explain.

After a chaotic hour of freeing contestants from their cells, recovering others, and trying to explain what happened to those who were killed, everyone was crowded in Two's main lab room, surrounding the table that the numeral had been working on before Donut and Bomby interfered. Together, the 63 of them absorbed all six of Two's logs. Although the scientist had handwritten the first two and recorded the next three, their sixth and most recent one was typed up on their laptop.

({[LOG: 006]})

Today's date is March 26th, 2020. The experiment was a smashing success! Everything went as well as I had hoped. All 34 subjects discovered their powers within two days of receiving them, and several of them performed extraordinarily. Hosting a small competition against each other using their abilities wasn't something I expected, but I probably should have. Competitions are the only thing objects seem to be good for, after all.

Unsurprisingly, there was a little bit of pushback from Subject 016, with some help from 010. They tried and failed several times to wake 057, as 016 believed he held answers to why many of them had suddenly gained powers. He could have, of course, but my methods ensured that he stayed unconscious and couldn't utter a word until I brought them all back.

The only other small concern was my assistant. His loyalties continue to dwindle rapidly. As I stated before, he shouldn't do anything rash as long

as I have his friends under my power, but I'll need to keep an eye on him just in case.

I would write more, but I'm too excited to keep experimenting now that all the subjects and other objects are back. Signing o

It abruptly ended there.

Everyone was silent for a few moments before Taco scratched her head. "So... Two kidnapped us after episode 12, and everything we remember between then and the mansion party is all just... fake memories?"

"What *I* want to know is who the assistant is," Golf Ball harrumphed. "He was never named in the logs, but judging from Two's words, it's easy to deduce that it's one of us. The third log noted to "never let Subject 005 near the assistant," and since that was noted in the section about Match's firebending powers, we can safely assume that the assistant is flammable." She turned to Bomby and Donut. "You two were the ones who managed to stop Two. Did you find any other clues around here as to who the assistant is?"

Bomby gulped. He'd been dreading this moment. But before he could say a word, Donut answered GB's question. "We don't know," he outright lied. "Bomby and I managed to take down Two because we got lucky, but nobody else was out of their cell when we freed y-"

"No." Bomby stopped him. "Donut, I... let me tell them. Th-they should know the truth." He turned towards everyone and inhaled deeply. "...I was Two's assistant."

The resulting silence was almost worse than if they had all started yelling at him. Anxiously, he continued. "A couple years ago, when we were only a few episodes into BFB, I received a letter from Two. They claimed they had randomly selected me to help them perform an... experiment." They shuddered. "At the time, I didn't know how far they were willing to go. They said that together, we could give a bunch of you guys... well, superpowers, basically. They made it sound so glamorous."

"So I said yes. I excitedly wrote back using to Two using the return

address on the original letter, telling them I was in. Soon after, I got a second one from them, saying that they'd contact me again when it was time. They also mentioned that I couldn't tell anyone else so that it would be a surprise..." Bomby rubbed his eyes. "That should've been a red flag right there. But like I said, I was too excited about the whole prospect."

"Time passed. I waited, but Two never responded. Although I didn't ever quite forget about their offer, the thought of the whole experiment was pushed to the back of my mind... until I found myself being recovered by them after exploding in episode 14. At the time they recovered me, episode 15 was happening live, and they told me to prepare to bring everyone in once the episode finished airing."

Bomby sat down and placed his head in his hands. "I... I didn't know that what Two meant by that was *kidnapping.* When I saw all of you in your cells, and learned that they killed Black Hole... and Four and X..." Several objects stifled gasps at this. "...I argued, I complained, I even tried to fight back. Keeping you guys *trapped* down here wasn't what I had signed up for, even if it resulted in mystical powers. But they threatened me to keep working with them at first, and later, when I tried to argue again, they threatened some of you guys instead."

"Two didn't go out of their way to harm you guys during their experiments, and I mostly did things like grunt work — they were the one who performed the majority of the actual sciency stuff. But they... they were willing to do anything to get results, whether that meant you all got hurt or not. They didn't care. And despite them threatening me... doesn't me just being a bystander while they hurt you all make me just as bad as them?"

The room was dead silent when he finished. Most of the others showed their reactions through their faces; anger, bewilderment, resentment, sadness, disgust... betrayal. Some more than others. Naily in particular looked utterly crushed.

After what seemed like an eternity of densely-packed negative emotions, Basketball stepped forwards. "...well. Erm. We should... probably talk more about all that later. But right now..." She glanced around the room. "...where the heck ARE we?"

"Under the contesting grounds," answered Bomby after a short pause of realizing nobody else knew. "The left door of that building on the patio... it's an elevator that leads down here. It's just down the hall."

Tree coughed. "Yes, I'd love to feel the sun again, thanks. I haven't been in here that long, yet the florescent lights are already making me feel wilted. But don't we still need to recover Four and X?"

"I already tried that, using Two's recovery center," Tennis Ball chimed in, "but nothing happened. I assumed they were still alive until Bomby mentioned they were dead."

"We'll have to find some other way to bring them back, then..."

"And what are we going to do with Loser?" added Gaty.

The already-oppressive mood in the lab darkened another notch. Everyone had been so absorbed in Bomby's explanation that they'd all momentarily forgotten about the cuboid's... questionable actions.

"What..." Firey hesitantly began to speak. "...what about those weird bracelet... things? If Two made one for everyone, then couldn't we use Loser's to safely stop him from taking any more powers?"

Lollipop scoffed. "Why even bother? I couldn't possibly fathom Loser escaping that... mirror realm on his own. There's no need to give him another thought."

"Because he still has the abilities of several others here, abilities that they probably want back," responded Firey, glaring at the sweet. "And although what he did wasn't right, he was partially influenced by something Two did to him. Plus, nobody deserves to just be trapped like that forever. Unless you've already forgotten that Two was doing the same thing to us?"

Thrown off-balance, Lollipop took a step back. Since Firey was usually an overall goofball, everyone was surprised to see him acting so seriously. What's more, he actually had a point.

Gelatin raised his hand from somewhere in the crowd. "But how would we even extract our powers from him?"

"I'm sure TB and I could figure something out, especially with access to all of Two's notes," GB offered. TB nodded in agreement.

Blocky clapped his hands together. "Right! That's all sorted. I don't know about you guys, but I'm going back to the surface now. This place is starting to make me feel claustrophobic." Many of the other contestants agreed and began to file out into the hallway, heading towards the elevator.

As much as Bomby wanted to be out of that accursed lab, however, he had a job to do. Tapping Needle on the shoulder, he told her, "I'm going to go get Loser's power dampener. Two made sure to hide any mirrors down here, so I don't know where they are, but you can use the one that's still leaning against the building on the surface when you're ready to retrieve Loser."

Needle nodded, purposefully making sure her face didn't betray any emotion. She wasn't sure how to feel about him yet. As Bomby turned towards the cabinets that held the power dampening bracelets, Lightning suddenly floated down to his level. "I don't know why Two couldn't wipe my memories," he hissed, "but that just means I still remember *everything* they did to the others. I could hear the occasional scream. I still do." The energy bolt shuddered. "They echo in my head sometimes. So I hope you know you've got a *lot* to answer for."

Bomby simply closed his eyes in shame.

In the mirror realm, silence was by far the overpowering factor. Or was that loneliness...? Loser wasn't sure. Perhaps it was the lack of physical stimulation when it came to touching the ground, or anything else. No sounds that weren't caused by him, no company, no feeling, nothing to distract him from his thoughts... Loser figured it was only a matter of time before he went insane. But to add insult to injury, the lack of *anything* other than him and the distant faces of mirrors made it nearly impossible to accurately track how long that would even take.

So you can only imagine how relieved Loser was to suddenly see

movement emerging from the nearest mirror.

At first, he thought he was seeing things. An arm sticking out of a mirror, holding a metal bracelet? Absurd. The only object with the power to access the mirror realm probably hated him, and definitely wouldn't voluntarily return.

But then the silver band beeped and flew out of the mysterious hand's grip, soaring towards Loser and latching onto his right arm before he even had a chance to react. Then Needle and Bomby fully stepped into the void, and a wave of relief washed over the former celebrity.

He rushed over to them, not caring at the moment how they may have felt about them. Needle flinched, but straightened herself as Loser reached them, remembering that he was powerless as long as he wore the bracelet. "Thank goodness!" he rasped, desperation in his voice. "Get me out of here, please!!"

"As much as I'd like to leave you to rot in here forever," she spat, "you've got several powers that don't belong to you, and we're going to return them, whether you like it or not." She grabbed his arm. "Ready when you are, Bomby."

The volatile object nodded. He took a few steps forward, leaned down, and carefully set down the item he'd been carrying — the syringe which contained Two's essence. A pair of eyes floating in the magical plasma watched Bomby as he stood back up, and he met their gaze. "You're saying here until we figure out what to do with you, where you can't do any harm."

Unable to respond, Two simply watched the three objects exit the mirror realm, leaving them along with nothing but their thoughts.

Hearing footsteps, Donut looked up to see Needle pass through the mirror's surface and back into the real world, one hand on Bomby's shoulder and the other gripping Loser's arm tightly. He was relieved to see a metal band tightly wrapped around the cuboid's wrist (but not as tightly as Needle's grasp). "Glad that went as planned," he commented.

"Of course it went as planned," replied Needle. "Pillow's future-telling may be freaky, but it's pretty helpful."

Donut nodded agreement and waited for her to lead Loser away — taking care to avoid eye contact with the former celebrity — before turning to Bomby. "So..." he said. "Here we are."

"Here we are," Bomby repeated.

They were both quiet for a moment. "Why..." began Bomby, breaking the silence. "Why did you try to... protect me earlier? You didn't have to lie about knowing I was Two's assistant."

Sighing, Donut uncrossed his arms. He'd seen this coming. "To be honest... I'm not entirely sure. But I think it's because I... used to be scared of you."

Bomby blinked at this. "Really? Like, scared that I could explode and kill you at any time, or-"

"No, scared because of the whole... Two thing." Donut sat down and scratched the back of his head. "I found those letters between you and Two after episode four, when cleaning up the mess Gelatin made after he raided the dumpster for the contest. I wasn't sure what to make of them at first. Powers definitely sounded really cool, but something about the way they phrased their words made me... uneasy."

"I decided not to say anything yet, though, to respect Two's wishes for the event to be a surprise. But later on, in episode six, I was able to access some of Four's memories after we were multiplied together. He had known Two, as well as various other algebraliens, and through those memories I learned that Two was... well..." He paused. "The only good word for it is 'ruthless.' Sure, Four hurt us, too — but he only ever did like three different things to us. Two, however, could be a lot worse... especially if someone made them mad" The pastry shuddered. "The things I saw in Four's memories..."

He shook his head, clearing his mind. "Anyway, when I realized how bad Two was, I became terrified. Mainly of them, but also of you. I thought you might have known what they were like. So from then on,

the reason I didn't say anything about the letters to anyone else was because I was scared of what you or Two might do to me if you found out. That's probably irrational, I know."

"But my point is, when I realized you *hadn't* known what Two was like, and that you *didn't* want to do horrible things to us like they apparently did, I was elated. That's why I lied about knowing you helped them. Sure, you were still in the wrong for several months, and there's a part of me that's angry at you for not doing anything sooner. But... I understand that you were manipulated and didn't have much of a choice in the matter."

Bomby didn't say a word for several seconds. "So..." he finally tried, a sliver of hope creeping into his voice, "...you forgive me...?"

The answer came in the form of a head shake. "I don't think so. Not yet." Bomby deflated slightly at this. "But again, I understand the situation you were put in. And in the end, you still managed to do the right thing and helped me take down Two. So... someday. Alright?"

Realizing the logic in Donut's argument, Bomby nodded at this. Forgiveness took time. Hell, he was lucky the pastry was even considering it. It was unlikely that many of the other contestants would be doing the same.

After another minute of not speaking, they got up and walked back towards the general crowd in the distance. Their world had been shattered and broken, and there were still things to be done, powers to return, algebraliens to recover. But they could fix it. It would take time. But eventually, they would get things back to normal.

Someday.

~~~~~~~~~~

They'd fix it with the *power* of friendship! /s

In all seriousness, though... this book was certainly an experience to write. I originally jumped into it with very little initial planning, aside from who would get what powers. Then it went on hold for eight months, and now, almost a year after I started working on it again, I've managed to power through and complete it... somehow.

I know I said this before with *IDFBC,* but I REALLY regret not planning more for this story before releasing the first chapter. I mean, 32 objects? Each with their own power? I bit off WAY more than I could chew. Sure, I managed to give all of them at least a *little* bit of focus, even if the focus for several of them was just filler. But with 32 objects, there would have had to been either a LOT of filler or a LOT of plot to give all of them the focus they deserved. Since I didn't have too much plot-wise planned from the start, and since I eventually discovered that writing filler can be *really* tricky and annoying... yeah.

Tl;dr, there are many things I'd go back and change if I could, but I'm happy I at least managed to (hopefully) tie (mostly) everything together into a (somewhat) coherent storyline. At the very least, many of you seemed to enjoy the book, and at the end of the day, that always makes me feel warm and fuzzy inside :)

A couple other small notes: I realized halfway through writing this chapter that it was the first time I'd written Two in any of my stories. Felt a little weird. Also, props to those who predicted that Two was the mastermind! Seems like some of ya caught the hint I gave in the second log ;)
~~~~~~~~~~

That's about all I have to say right now. I'll post a general update on stuff in JJJ sometime within the next few days, probably. I need to go to sleep because it's 1 AM lmao. Take care, and thank you for reading this wonderful mess of a book!

- Jabe